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Master Thesis

**THE MEMORY POLITICS OF BECOMING EUROPEAN: ESTONIAN  
SUBALTERN NARRATIVE IN THE FILM *IN THE CROSSWIND* (2014)**

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I have written the Master's thesis independently.

All works and major viewpoints of the other authors, data from other sources of literature and elsewhere used for writing this paper have been referenced.

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## ABSTRACT

### **The memory politics of becoming European: Estonian subaltern narrative in the film *In The Crosswind* (2014)**

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This thesis aims to analyze Estonian historical art film *In the Crosswind* (2014) as a product of cultural memory, which represents the national trauma of Soviet deportations in 1941-1949. The film is analyzed in a broader social and political framework of the European collective memory divide over the history of the Second World War and its aftermath. The thesis argues that *In the Crosswind* can be considered as attempt of Estonia as one of Eastern European states to promote their subaltern narrative of Stalinist crimes and victimization and achieve recognition among “Old” Europeans, which is part of their ‘politics of becoming European’.

This thesis uses a multidisciplinary approach, which is based on a theory of memory studies, trauma theory and cultural media studies and attempts to analyze, how the Estonian national trauma of deportations is represented and constructed in the film, so it would find acceptance and recognition among the foreign audience. This thesis analyzes the cinematic techniques and iconography, used in the film to narrate the story of deportations trauma. As the film is analyzed not only as a work of art, but in a broader socio-political context, the thesis employs method of visual Critical Discourse Analysis, combined with iconographic, narrative and intertextual analysis.

*In the Crosswind* can be considered as a successfully constructed trauma representation, which attempts to challenge the dominant memory discourse of communist crimes in Europe and promote Estonian national narrative of deportation trauma. Through the means of prosthetic memory, the film has a potential to influence the foreign audience and contribute to the construction of transnational memory of Stalinist crimes. It would be an overstatement to say that this goal is achieved with one film, but it is definitely a case of contribution to the Eastern European memory politics of ‘becoming European’.

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## INTRODUCTION

Eastern European states, which are struggling with post-soviet legacy, have constructed their national identity based on narratives of victimization, incorporating the Soviets (and Russians) as ‘significant Other’, externalizing communism and emphasizing Stalinism crimes towards their nations and national traumas. These national narratives appear to be controversial, when entering the hegemonic Western European narrative of WWII and post-war period, as they presuppose equalizing the crimes of Nazi and Holocaust to the crimes of the Soviets. The national narratives of Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania following M. Mäliksoo’s argument, can be defined as subaltern narratives, which attempt to challenge the dominant European writing of Second World War history.

Eastern European countries' efforts to enlarge the mnemonic vision of the “United Europe” can be considered as a part of their politics of “becoming European” in order to appease their security concern and gain the EU support to influence Russia to express regret for Stalinist crimes. However, the Western Europe does not express clear willingness to listen to and adopt the counter narratives of their Eastern neighbors, as these narratives do not subscribe well to the conventional hegemonic discourse of WWII in Europe. Yet, Estonia among the others still wants to have its voice heard in Europe and uses its memory politics to enter the European mnemonic field and contribute to constructing a transnational memory of Stalinism crimes. The Estonian cultural trauma of Soviet deportations and mass repressions is a wound in national memory which seeks to be cured by successful trauma representation, narrative construction and its successful dissemination.

Films, among other tools of memory politics, are one of the most powerful instruments for memory dissemination due to their availability to a broad audience, visual and audio techniques which make a film emotional and thus help remember its narrative better. Films’ experiential nature makes them also carriers of prosthetic memory, which appears on the edge of experiencing the story in the film and adopting these memories later as one’s own remembrance. This way films and prosthetic memory might suggest the way for the national memory dissemination and recognition among the other national groups. Historical

movies can be thus considered to be such mnemonic tools, which can be used to communicate the national story abroad and to tell this story in a way which would allow to involve the broad audience and help them adopt those memories without directly experiencing them.

### **Research puzzle connected with the topic relevance and aim of the thesis**

It is intriguing to try to discover how the mnemonic divide in European collective memory over two totalitarian regimes might be overcome and a narrative, inclusive of Eastern European experience (Estonian subaltern narrative among it) might be constructed and how this story of trauma can be told so to find broader understanding and recognition? Might the cultural tools, like historical films with the means of prosthetic memory, succeed where the political discourse and institutional debates appear to be not fully successful? This puzzle of tangled European collective memory and the possible ways to untangle it is of particular interest for this study.

Stemming from all mentioned above, we can formulate the research question: in a broader framework of European collective memory and Eastern European post-soviet states' attempts to challenge the European hegemonic historical narrative, how the Estonian national narrative of trauma and victimhood is represented in the Estonian contemporary historical movie such as *In the Crosswind* and in what ways, with the help of what means this trauma narrative is delivered through the movie?

The aim of this thesis is to contribute to the studies, already done in the field of European collective and transnational memory, memory politics and European memory regimes by putting the case study of Estonian national narrative into the framework of European collective memory and since the focus of the thesis is made on a historical movie as a tool of memory politics, the study also aims to contribute to contemporary film studies in a broader academic context. This thesis will attempt to see how the historical film tries to represent the national narrative and to construct a national trauma for the foreign audience and transcend the cultural memory abroad.

The topic is considered to be relevant due to the growing academic interest to the field of memory studies on the one hand and its importance of improving the imbalance of remembering and studying of past in Western and Eastern Europe. The international conflicts more and more often use the rhetoric of history and memory to justify the political decisions and make ground for political claims. Looking at the recent geopolitical developments in the EU – Russia conflict, one may discover the growing importance of history among other factors which are brought out to explain the unfolding conflict. The security issues are most often standing behind the growing rhetoric of memory and history. It is most of all visible in the case of the post-Soviet countries such as Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Ukraine and others. The appeals to the pitfalls of history are made when an uncertainty in security issues exists and a state has to secure itself by appealing to the stronger partners and reminding the traumas experienced in the past to prevent them happening again in the present. This brings together the issues of security, history, memory and ‘Europeanness’ which is a primary goal for the ‘new’ European members. Thus, it makes sense to pay attention to the attempts of the Eastern post-soviet states to make claims for ‘Europeanness’ by promoting their national historical narratives, which problematize and challenge the existing hegemonic historical narratives of the ‘old Europe’. Scholars such as Duncan Bell, despite being pessimistic towards a likelihood of united European memory, argue that one should not exclude such possibility, which only proves the importance of study of transnational dissemination of memory across different contexts.<sup>1</sup>

The case study of Estonia is very interesting and can provide a new perspective on the European collective memory dimension. Estonia is chosen from the three Baltic states due to its acute geopolitical situation/location, as it is a post-Soviet state which is a Russian neighbor and has one of the biggest Russian-speaking minorities among the Baltic states. All above mentioned is a reason for experts to talk about the danger of Ukrainian scenario and urges Estonian government to make efforts to remind the Western Europe about its tragic historical fate in order to secure it from the scenario of Russian invasion. Thus, all means of memory politics, which are being aimed abroad, count and among them, the historical movies aimed for a broader international audience, are of particular interest.

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<sup>1</sup> Duncan Bell, *Memory, Trauma And World Politics* (Basingstoke [England]: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p.2

They can be considered as powerful tools of memory politics aimed abroad. The choice of Estonian historical movie *In the Crosswind* is explained by its genre, topic representation and because it is relatively new but has already captured a broad international attention and received a number of prestigious awards,

*In the Crosswind* is Estonian full-length feature film, directed by Martti Helde and released in 2014, with an international premiere at Toronto Film Festival. The movie is dedicated to the period of Soviet occupation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and tells the story of Estonian woman Erna and her family, who were deported to Siberia. This is an art-house film, which uses a specific *tableaux vivants* visual technique to create a feeling of 'time frozen' and immerse the viewers into the atmosphere. The film has clearly expressed ambition to reach the foreign audience, as it was first time shown at the international film festival and since premiere, it has taken part in 8 festivals and received 9 awards such as the audience prize at the Gothenburg festival and a special jury prize at the Premiers Plans festival in France.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, it was awarded as the best Estonian film of the year in 2014.

This thesis argues that *In the Crosswind* influences the conventional understanding of history and memory of WWII and its aftermath in Europe by promoting Estonian national subaltern narrative and contributing to the establishment of transnational remembrance of Stalinist crimes.

The goal of this thesis is not to prove that the Stalinism crimes have taken place in Estonia, neither to argue that the Stalinism crimes deserve the same recognition as the Nazi's crimes. There is no intention to show how the national narratives of victimization are strengthening the national identity or how Estonian collective memory is shaping Estonian identity. This study aims to see how this already formed national narrative and cultural memory are transferred abroad to find recognition and find their place in the hegemonic historical narrative. For this a historical movie was chosen, which is in one hand, a perfect tool for representing national cultural memory and in another, is a perfect tool for transferring the cultural memory to other national groups, therewith making it a

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<sup>2</sup> News | ERR, 'In The Crosswind': Eight Festivals, Nine Prizes', 2015  
<<http://news.err.ee/v/Culture/ca41629b-fbf4-49b9-b566-fe622d35b7e9>> [accessed 9 April 2015].



transnational memory with the help of prosthetic memory. *In the Crosswind* is the first full-length Estonian film, which is dedicated to the mass deportations and reconstructs the biggest national trauma. Moreover, it is the first such film with a clear appeal to the international audience. It should also be mentioned that although this thesis analyzes the methods and techniques used in the film to achieve recognition and refers to the international film critics' reviews, not on any account it tries to measure the acceptance of the film by the audience.

### **Research questions, tasks and methods**

To fulfill the aim of the thesis, we should define the research questions, which the thesis would try to answer. The analysis of the film *In the Crosswind* will attempt to show how the film actually uses various cinematic techniques and elements of film or narrative form to tell a story and to engage the international audience in order to transcend the cultural memory. To answer this question, we have to use the media studies approach to movie analysis, which allows us to analyze the film structure, style, plot, characters, narrative structure, etc. – this will help us see how the message is delivered and is the trauma representation aim achieved in the movie – for this, the theoretical concept of trauma and criteria for trauma representation by J. Alexander will be used; the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach would be employed in order to put the film as a text in a broader social and political context and to explore the European memory discourse and how the film subscribes to it and intertextuality that is employed in the film in order to facilitate recognition. For this, a body of literature on memory studies will be brought in to build up a theoretical ground, which will give a starting point for the analysis of empirical data. Critical Discourse Analysis will be used to explore the ideology and power relations behind this discourse about Stalinism crimes recognition in Europe and to see how well this film subscribes into this discourse. Besides, this approach can be combined with narrative and iconographic analysis and allows employing intertextual analysis, which is an important part of the CDA.

## CHAPTER ONE: MNEMONIC MAP OF EUROPE

### Collective, cultural, transnational and prosthetic memory

Memory has been an object of studies in many disciplines, starting obviously from biology, psychology, physiology and up to literature and social science, where it has launched a whole new branch of memory politics studies. During the last few decades, scholars have done an abundant research and developed a body of literature on memory and history studies. For political science scholars, the particular interest lies in the intersection of international politics and politics of memory and identity which allows looking at the international relations and conflicts from a quite different angle. But how is a human memory related to domestic and international politics, and how can it be politicized? Aleida Assmann claims that “history is not only what comes long after politics; it has also become the stuff and fuel of politics.”<sup>3</sup>

We should start with a definition of a collective memory. This is the oldest concept and works of French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs are the reference point for most collective memory studies, even though he has been criticized for determined anti-individualism.<sup>4</sup> According to Halbwachs, “collective memories are collectively shared representations of the past”, they are a social phenomenon and individuals acquire their memories only in society – family, region and social class.<sup>5</sup> Halbwachs’ account of collective memory also “implies a geographically bounded community”.<sup>6</sup> His idea was that memory can be maintained through “the continuous production of representational forms, such as literary texts”.<sup>7</sup> The text, however, as it is claimed by Jan and Aleida Assmann, can be not only literary, but can obtain a broader meaning, which is essential for our research analysis. Aleida Assmann in her works answers to the criticism towards the collective memory and its relation to the individual memory. Wulf Kansteiner argues that there is no such thing as

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<sup>3</sup> Aleida Assmann, 'Transformations Between History And Memory', *Social research*, 75 (2008).

<sup>4</sup> Wolf Kansteiner, 'Finding Meaning In Memory: A Methodological Critique Of Collective Memory Studies', *History and Theory*, 41 (2002), 179-197

<sup>5</sup> Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004). p.8

<sup>6</sup> *ibid*

<sup>7</sup> Ewa Mazierska, *European Cinema And Intertextuality* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p.5

‘collective memory’ because memory is something deeply individual and cannot be embodied.<sup>8</sup> Susan Sontag also argues that a society cannot remember because memory is a function of the brain and neurosystem, while institutions do not possess one.<sup>9</sup> But Assmann asserts that interaction with other individuals and with external signs and symbols is crucial for collective memory. Thus, even though our own memories cannot be transferred or embodied to anybody else, they can be shared by the means of language and images.<sup>10</sup> Also, as it has been stated by Kansteiner, sometimes it is difficult to define which memories have been our own experiences and which stories we have been told and incorporated them into our memory later.<sup>11</sup>

Halbwachs’ concept of collective memory has been developed further by Jan and Aleida Assmann, who have distinguished the “cultural memory” and “communicative memory”.<sup>12</sup> According to Assmann, communicative memory includes those implications of collective memory, which are “based on everyday communication and it lasts only as long as human life”.<sup>13</sup> But as soon as communicative memory is represented in a cultural product, such as a film or novel, applying the language of narratives and using cultural symbols, it can be considered as a cultural memory.<sup>14</sup> Cultural memory, thus can be defined as a “body of reusable texts and images”<sup>15</sup> which are different for each society and serve this society. According to Jan Assmann, cultural memory can be represented in texts, images, rituals, in other words, objectified culture, including buildings and monuments.<sup>16</sup> Aleida Assmann argues that the term ‘collective memory’ is kind of an umbrella term for many different formats of memory, that can be distinguished between themselves. Family memory, social, political, national, cultural memory – these forms are different, but they all can be included

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<sup>8</sup> Wolf Kansteiner, 'Finding Meaning In Memory: A Methodological Critique Of Collective Memory Studies', *History and Theory*, 41 (2002), p.180

<sup>9</sup> Aleida Assmann, 'Transformations Between History And Memory', *Social research*, 75 (2008), p.49

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p.50

<sup>11</sup> Wolf Kansteiner, 'Finding Meaning In Memory: A Methodological Critique Of Collective Memory Studies', *History and Theory*, 41 (2002), p.194

<sup>12</sup> Ewa Mazierska, *European Cinema And Intertextuality* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p.5

<sup>13</sup> ibid

<sup>14</sup> Jan Assmann, 'Collective Memory And Cultural Identity', *New German Critique*, 1995, p.128

<sup>15</sup> Jan Assmann, 'Collective Memory And Cultural Identity', *New German Critique*, 1995, p.132

<sup>16</sup> ibid

in collective memory.<sup>17</sup> Duncan Bell agrees, adding that collective memory (even if we call it social or cultural memory) shapes the story about the past, that groups of people tell each other in order to “link their past, present and future in a simplified narrative”.<sup>18</sup> Such groups of people are political elites who use the national memory for their own goals, such as reinforcing national identity or legitimizing political decisions. Thus, it would be logical to reinforce remembering some particular events or myths to unite people and to employ cultural practices, myths and symbols from cultural memory.<sup>19</sup> This however also implies forced forgetting about some other events, so called ‘collective amnesia’ about not so glorious parts of their past.

What is then a connection between the real and remembered? As Wulf Kansteiner puts it, all memories “only assume collective relevance when they are structured, represented and used in a social setting.”<sup>20</sup> Some ‘unwanted’ events may be excluded from the memory of the whole nations, but on the other hand, some nations may share the memories of events they never experienced by themselves, but nevertheless those events became a part of their collective memory.<sup>21</sup> The best example might be the adopted memories of the Holocaust in American society. This brings us to the problem of originating the memories, when the memory consumers cannot later identify where do their memories originate from and whether they are adopted, integrated or they come from their shared past. This is an important point in our theoretical discussion, as we will now discuss how the national memories of one group might be shared and adapted by other nations and thus become a transnational memory.

The concept of transnational memory has been elaborated by Aleida Assmann. As she states, the general challenge of the ‘trans’ is to “go beyond national identification, investments and interests and explore new forms of belonging and cultural identification”.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Aleida Assmann, 'Transformations Between History And Memory', *Social research*, 75 (2008), p.55

<sup>18</sup> Duncan Bell, *Memory, Trauma And World Politics* (Basingstoke [England]: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p.2

<sup>19</sup> Christian Emden and David Midgley, *Cultural Memory And Historical Consciousness In The German-Speaking World Since 1500* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2004), pp.35-36

<sup>20</sup> Wolf Kansteiner, 'Finding Meaning In Memory: A Methodological Critique Of Collective Memory Studies', *History and Theory*, 41 (2002), p.190

<sup>21</sup> *ibid*

<sup>22</sup> Aleida Assmann, 'Transnational Memories', *European Review*, 22 (2014), p.547

It can be claimed, that until recently, the focus of memory production was mainly inside the nation states, in other words “coming to terms with the past was largely a national project”.<sup>23</sup> The body of memory studies also has been criticized for so called ‘methodological nationalism’, as scholars have mainly focused on developments of memory politics within the boundaries of the states.<sup>24</sup> However, Aleida Assmann suggests that there is a promising potential in transnational turn as it may open new perspectives on the larger political context.<sup>25</sup> There have already been studies of transnational memory construction, such as Levy and Sznajder’s work on the Holocaust remembrance as a universal and cosmopolitan memory.<sup>26</sup> Looking at the Holocaust remembrance, one may assume that it has been agreed to make the Holocaust a long-term cultural memory (especially when witnesses, carriers of memory, are fading away) and to carry the Holocaust memory across European borders to make this a transnational memory. This is confirmed through numerous examples of the laws on Holocaust denial, institutions of remembrance, acts of commemoration and Holocaust education in all European nation states. However, as Aleida Assmann remarks, the presence of different memories in a global arena has led to the “worldwide competition for victimhood and concomitant claims for recognition and resources.”<sup>27</sup> Europe is still a battlefield, when it comes to interpreting, representing and commemorating the European past.<sup>28</sup>

European ‘memory wars’ are still mainly going on around division by the two core traumatic events of the XX century – the Holocaust and the Gulag.<sup>29</sup> There is a clear imbalance between these two memories, as while the memory of Nazi genocide has been transformed into a “trans-generational and transnational memory, providing the EU with a ‘foundation myth’”, the memory of Stalin’s crimes is still contested and not fully

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<sup>23</sup> Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad, *Memory In A Global Age* (Houndsmills, Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p.2

<sup>24</sup> Astrid Erll, 'Traumatic Pasts, Literary Afterlives, And Transcultural Memory: New Directions Of Literary And Media Memory Studies', *Journal of AESTHETICS & CULTURE*, 3 (2011), p.4

<sup>25</sup> Aleida Assmann, 'Transnational Memories', *European Review*, 22 (2014), p.547

<sup>26</sup> Daniel Levy and Natan Sznajder, *The Holocaust And Memory In The Global Age* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006).

<sup>27</sup> Aleida Assmann, 'Transnational Memories', *European Review*, 22 (2014), p.551-552

<sup>28</sup> *ibid*

<sup>29</sup> *ibid*

recognized either in Russian and Western political memory.<sup>30</sup> One can talk even about ‘pan-European’ memory in relation to the Holocaust, as Levy and Sznajder argue that in the post-Cold war period, the Holocaust has become a foundation stone in the attempt to forge a new European identity’.<sup>31</sup> They also argue that the global spread of Holocaust discourse provides the foundations for a ‘cosmopolitan memory’, as something that most people can agree on, a ‘global icon’ of suffering.<sup>32</sup> However, there is an obvious lack of cohesion upon the ‘cosmopolitan’, transnational European memory of the Gulag.

The memories of the communism, which have been for a long time repressed, have risen in the liberated republics, and this rise of memory has been observed “with considerable anxiety and irritation” by the Western observers.<sup>33</sup> According to Assmann, two barriers against adopting both memories of the Holocaust and the Gulag as transnational can be defined: firstly, the transnational memory of Stalin’s crimes might be a threat to the established Holocaust memory; secondly, it would threaten “the singularity of the Holocaust in a unifying theory of totalitarianism.”<sup>34</sup> These are the reasons why the memory wars in Europe over the Stalinism legacy are far from the end.

As Duncan Bell emphasizes, “it is important to study the transnational dissemination of memory and the uses to which images of and stories about the past translate across national and regional contexts.”<sup>35</sup> Aleida Assmann adds, that there is a possibility to overcome this memory pitfall and to establish a transnational European memory of both Nazi and Stalin’s crimes, and offers the perspective of German historian Bernd Faulenbach, who came up with a certain diplomatic solution to this memory trap. According to Faulenbach, a transnational memory of both traumas could exist in one mnemonic space if the memory of

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<sup>30</sup> Aleida Assmann, 'Transnational Memories', *European Review*, 22 (2014), pp.551-552

<sup>31</sup> Daniel Levy and Natan Sznajder (2002) *Memory Unbound: The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory*. *European Journal of Social Theory* 5(1): p.96-97

<sup>32</sup> Daniel Levy and Natan Sznajder (2002) *Memory Unbound: The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory*. *European Journal of Social Theory* 5(1): p.96-97

<sup>33</sup> Aleida Assmann, 'Transnational Memories', *European Review*, 22 (2014), pp.551-552

<sup>34</sup> *ibid*

<sup>35</sup> Duncan Bell, *Memory, Trauma And World Politics* (Basingstoke [England]: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p.19

Stalinist terror would not be allowed to relativize the memory of the Holocaust – and in turn, the memory of the Holocaust should not trivialize the memory of the Gulag.<sup>36</sup>

However, one may assume that this diplomatic solution has not been implemented fully, as there is visible adherence only to the first part of the conditions in European institutions. The national memories still belong mostly to their respective nations and the way to give them a boost to the transnational level looks troublesome. Yet, there is a way out of this national memory trap, which lies in cultural memory dissemination tools such as historical films. Alison Landsberg has developed a concept of prosthetic memory, which is an instrument that helps transcend cultural memory from one nation to another through the experiential nature of films. Landsberg is mostly concerned with the questions of to what extent modern technologies, such as film, function as technology of memory and how individuals might “be affected by memories of events through which they did not live?”<sup>37</sup> She argues, that new technologies like cinema, transform memory by “unprecedented circulation of images and narratives about the past” and therefore a new form of public cultural memory emerges, which is called a prosthetic memory.<sup>38</sup> This new form of memory emerges when an individual consumes a historical narrative about past in such experiential site as a movie theater or museum and during this process, the person does not simply “apprehend” this historical narrative, but ‘takes on’ a more personal, deeply felt memories of a past event that was not lived through with him or her.<sup>39</sup> She claims that the result of such experiential process would be prosthetic memory, which then might be able to influence the person’s subjectivity.

As we have discussed earlier, the collective memory has usually been associated with social framework, more precisely with a framework of nation and culture. In the traditional understanding, collective memory would exist as such within a particular social group or community and another group might not be able to adopt their collective memory due to different cultural codes and myths. However, prosthetic memory dares to challenge the

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<sup>36</sup> Faunlenbach cited in Aleida Assmann, 'Transnational Memories', *European Review*, 22 (2014), p.553

<sup>37</sup> Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), p.1

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, p.2

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, p.2

traditional forms of memory, as it is claimed not to “belong exclusively to a particular group...Through the technologies of mass culture, it becomes possible for these memories to be acquired by anyone, regardless of skin color, ethnic background, or biology.”<sup>40</sup> As Landsberg argues, cinema and other mass culture technologies are able to create social frameworks for people “who inhabit, literally and figuratively, different social spaces, practices, and beliefs”.<sup>41</sup> She explains, that prosthetic memory became possible due to mass culture technologies, which were called up to preserve group memory by circulating images and narratives about the past, but it has changed from ‘private’ group memory to product, available to a broader audience.<sup>42</sup> The most important about the prosthetic memory is that, unlike traditional forms of memory, it does not simply reinforce a particular group’s identity by sharing memories, but also opens up those memories for the public and therefore increases its chances of attaining social and political recognition.<sup>43</sup> “Prosthetic memories are neither purely individual nor entirely collective but emerge at the interface of individual and collective experience.”<sup>44</sup> Thus, by offering a tool for transcend of memories to people who have no national or private claims for them and producing empathy and social responsibility, prosthetic memory can be considered as a powerful tool in ‘transnationalization’ of memory. “As individually felt cultural memories, prosthetic memories have the ability to alter a person’s political outlook and affiliation as well as to motivate political action.”<sup>45</sup> Thus, we can consider prosthetic memory to be a possible way out the trap of ‘memory nationalism’ and therefore, a way to overcome the memory wars over WWII in Europe and facilitate construction of united European historical remembrance of the war legacy.

### **Mnemonic regimes and memory wars in Europe**

Our theoretical framework should also include discussion of memory regimes in Western and Eastern Europe and the possible reasons for ongoing memory wars over the past. As

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<sup>40</sup> Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), p.2

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, p.2

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, p.11

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, p.11

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, p.19

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, p.19



Eva-Clarita Pettai asserts, it would be an important task to overcome the tensions between nations over memories and moreover, to develop a “shared European historical consciousness” in order to succeed with the European integration.<sup>46</sup> Thus, after her approach, it would be useful to employ existing analytical frameworks such as of “memory regimes” competition and types of collective memory (which have been discussed in the previous part). It would be useful then to identify existing memory regimes in Europe.<sup>47</sup>

In the post-war period in Europe, two main regimes emerged. The first, which can be called after Tony Judt, a “common European currency”<sup>48</sup> was constructed based on agreement upon Nazi Germany collective guilt for the Holocaust and war atrocities.<sup>49</sup> Another dominant memory discourse arose from the historical myths of national resistance in the European countries, which have been occupied during the WWII.<sup>50</sup> As Pettai claims, those two memory regimes employed a ‘collective amnesia’ about war collaboration and profiteering, and since 1970s the third narrative about the singularity of the Holocaust fell into line with the previous two.<sup>51</sup> After the resolution, adopted in 2005, participation in the Holocaust community of memory for the Eastern Europeans has become “part of the entry ticket to the EU”.<sup>52</sup> Claus Leggewie in his account on transnational memory also considers Europe to be a ‘battlefield’ for divided memories.<sup>53</sup> For him the most important question is whether all Europeans have shared memories and common historical consciousness. Leggewie claims that “anyone who wishes to give a European society a political identity will rate the discussion and recognition of disputed memories just as highly as treaties, a common currency and open borders.”<sup>54</sup> Following his approach, we will adopt his

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<sup>46</sup> Eva-Clarita Onken, 'Commemorating 9 May: The Baltic States And European Memory Politics', in *Identity and Foreign Policy. Baltic - Russian Relations and European Integration*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), p. 37

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, p.37

<sup>48</sup> Judt, T. (2004), 'The Past is Another Country: Myth and Memory in Post-War Europe', in Müller, J-W. (ed.), *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

<sup>49</sup> Eva-Clarita Onken, 'Commemorating 9 May: The Baltic States And European Memory Politics', in *Identity and Foreign Policy. Baltic - Russian Relations and European Integration*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), p. 37

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, p.37

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, p.38

<sup>52</sup> Aleida Assmann, 'Europe's Divided Memory', in *Memory and theory in Eastern Europe*, 1st edn (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p.28

<sup>53</sup> Claus Leggewie, 'Battlefield Europe. Transnational Memory And European Identity', *Eurozine*, 2009.

<sup>54</sup> Claus Leggewie, 'Battlefield Europe. Transnational Memory And European Identity', *Eurozine*, 2009.

theoretical framework of seven circles of European memory, which will give us an insight into a nature of the European memory divide. However, only the two first circles are of interest to our theoretical inquiry.

The first circle consists of the Holocaust as the European negative founding myth. Europe cannot appeal to heroic deeds, thus it appeals to the greatest catastrophe. But the WWII has affected all Europeans and the singularity of the Holocaust appeared to be problematic when dealing with the Stalinism crimes in Eastern and Central Europe. This leads us to the second circle of European memory, which concerns the status of the Soviet crimes. While Nazi's crimes are condemned and the Holocaust denial is punishable in Europe, the Eastern European states insist that denial of the Soviet crimes should also be illegal.<sup>55</sup> For example, in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the 8/9 of May 1945 is not the liberation date, but rather a marker of another occupation, which causes controversy with the Russian official narrative of liberation from fascism. Thus, the Eastern Europeans are facing the increasing Russian aggression from one side and continuous Western European reluctance to compare the crimes against Jews to crimes against 'class enemies' and 'enemies of the people' from the other.<sup>56</sup> According to Leggewie, competition and hierarchy between Holocaust memory and Gulag memory "is probably the most significant baggage of a "divided" memory that wishes not to separate but to synthesize."<sup>57</sup> Leggewie suggests three reasons for the existence of such asymmetry in the European memory. First, the developed agreement upon the singularity of the Holocaust combined with recognition of Russian suffering and great losses in the WWII has "unwittingly obstructed awareness about "red totalitarianism".<sup>58</sup> Second, it can be explained by the fact that Nazi's crimes against the European Jews have obtained much more public awareness and attention (which is due to the Cold War and inaccessibility of the Soviet archives). Finally, the Soviet experience has remained mostly Eastern European at its core.

After we have eliminated the hegemonic Western memory regimes in European memory

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<sup>55</sup> Claus Leggewie, 'Battlefield Europe. Transnational Memory And European Identity', *Eurozine*, 2009.

<sup>56</sup> *ibid*

<sup>57</sup> *ibid*

<sup>58</sup> *ibid*

discourse and the reasons which keep mnemonic Europe apart, it would be useful to define also the alternative Eastern memory regimes that attempt to enter the ‘discourse competition’. We are particularly interested in one of them, striving for equal treatment to the Stalinism crimes in Europe as to the Nazi crimes. It would be also useful to analyze how in particular, this competing memory regime tries to enter the Western European memory discourse.<sup>59</sup>

Cultural memory ‘boom’ has happened in Eastern Europe just after the collapse of the USSR, and as distinct from the Western discourse, it has not been dominated by the memory of the Holocaust.<sup>60</sup> Contrariwise, the former communist republics were pursuing a goal to create a non-soviet space, emphasizing the “distinctive memory culture of victim nations of Central Europe that separated them from Russia.”<sup>61</sup> It is important to keep in mind that as Blacker et al claim, not just the dynamics and foci of Eastern European memory was different, but also different was the cultural material itself.<sup>62</sup> Thus, the ‘Franco-German’ solution cannot be adopted for the Eastern Europe.<sup>63</sup> In other words, the memories of the Jewish Holocaust cannot easily become dominant over the memory of the Soviet communist crimes. The post-communist states have started the mnemonic conflict with Russia as the Soviets successor and it is here the national traumas discourse has been articulated at most. Katyn massacre in Poland, deportations from the Baltic states at the time of WWII and afterwards, Holodomor in Ukraine are among the most controversial issues on mnemonic agenda of Eastern Europe.<sup>64</sup>

### **Trauma theory**

After regaining their independence, the states of Eastern Europe have started their ‘memory work’ of reevaluating and representing their national memories<sup>65</sup>. This has brought up the

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<sup>59</sup> Eva-Clarita Onken, ‘Commemorating 9 May: The Baltic States And European Memory Politics’, p. 38

<sup>60</sup> Uilleam Blacker, Aleksandr Ėtkind and Julie Fedor, *Memory And Theory In Eastern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p.4

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, p.1

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, p.5

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, p.5

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, p.8

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, p.8

narratives of victimhood of Belarusians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Estonians, Poles, Ukrainians and others, suffering during the WWII and in its aftermath both from the Nazis and Soviets, which has been left out of the Western memory before this memory boom.<sup>66</sup> These nations strive for their national narratives' recognition, which results in the 'double genocide' theory promotion, which implies equal status for totalitarian crimes of both Hitler and Stalin, among the EU members.<sup>67</sup>

Here we can refer to the theory of trauma to explore the victimhood narratives of Eastern Europe. Scholars of Eastern European memory have often referred to the concepts of trauma and mourning, where the former is a response to a suffering of self, while the latter is a response to a suffering of other.<sup>68</sup> On example of one nation, the survivors would struggle with their traumas and their children, who didn't experience the traumatic events themselves, would mourn the victims.<sup>69</sup> Nations usually tend to one among three ways to construct their narratives – as a winner, a resistor or a victim.<sup>70</sup> If a narrative is build around the traumatic events, then it would provide a 'protection shield' against the events that are preferable to forget.<sup>71</sup> Duncan Bell assumes that certain events, such as genocide, war, terrorism and so on, generate serious challenges to communal self-understanding and that memory of such traumas play an important role in shaping political affiliations and perceptions.<sup>72</sup> National identity is very important for state security and here, identity is considered to be a sense of 'self' which is sustained over time by a group. Anthony Smith argues that memory is vital for all kinds of identity, as there is 'no memory, no identity; no identity, no nation'.<sup>73</sup> In cases when national identity is threatened, language of memory is activated and language of trauma is employed.<sup>74</sup> As Alexander notices, when it comes to

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<sup>66</sup> Uilleam Blacker, Aleksandr Ètkind and Julie Fedor, *Memory And Theory In Eastern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).p.8

<sup>67</sup> Mälksoo,2009, Leggewie, 2006, Onken, 2007

<sup>68</sup> Uilleam Blacker, Aleksandr Ètkind and Julie Fedor, *Memory And Theory In Eastern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).p.10

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, p.10

<sup>70</sup> Aleida Assmann, 'Transnational Memories', *European Review*, 22 (2014), p.553

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, p.553

<sup>72</sup> Duncan Bell, *Memory, Trauma And World Politics* (Basingstoke [England]: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p.5

<sup>73</sup> Anthony D. Smith, 'Memory And Modernity: Reflections On Ernest Gellner's Theory Of Nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism*, 2 (1996), 371-388

<sup>74</sup> Duncan Bell, *Memory, Trauma And World Politics* (Basingstoke [England]: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p.7

national identity, then the national histories are “constructed around injuries that cry out for revenge”.<sup>75</sup> According to Alexander, a cultural trauma happens when a collectivity feels that it has experienced a horrible event which leaves an imprint on their group consciousness and stays in their memory forever and changes their identity in irrevocable ways.<sup>76</sup>

Societies and nations need the trauma concept, as they need to construct the cultural trauma in order to ‘take on board’ a responsibility for human suffering.<sup>77</sup> With that, trauma concept pursues the similar goal as prosthetic memory, as they both allow to ‘take on’ the memories and to share sufferings with others. Alexander stresses the importance of trauma for collective psychological health, suggesting that some collective means should be found (through commemoration acts, political struggle or cultural representation) which would allow to ‘undo’ repression and let the “emotions of loss and mourning to be expressed”.<sup>78</sup> He also points out that for trauma to emerge at the level of collectivity, a crisis should turn from a social to a cultural one.<sup>79</sup> For this, a representation of trauma on cultural level and with cultural means is needed.

But here the question that has to be answered is why traumas of some nations, such as Holocaust, have been recognized while others, like Nanjing Massacre, are called a ‘forgotten holocaust of the XX century’?<sup>80</sup> Does it depend on the nature or volume of suffering? Alexander claims that the reason for this is a failure to accomplish what he calls a ‘trauma process’ – when a carrier group make trauma claims but fail to disseminate these claims.<sup>81</sup> In other words, trauma representation should be made a persuasive narrative, which in turn should be successfully broadcasted to external audience. He argues that this is why some traumas have not been broadly recognized and perpetrators have not accepted responsibility and social solidarities have not been extended.<sup>82</sup> Such representation of

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<sup>75</sup> Jeffrey C. Alexander, 'Toward A Theory Of Cultural Trauma', in *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, 1st edn (Berkeley, CA, USA: University of California Press, 2004). p.8

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, p.8

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, p.8

<sup>78</sup> ibid. p.7

<sup>79</sup> ibid p.10

<sup>80</sup> ibid p.27

<sup>81</sup> ibid. p.27

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, p.27

trauma in one hand, is “simply telling a new story” about repression, yet this storytelling should follow some rules in order to become persuasive for a broader audience. According to Alexander, to persuade the audience that they also have become traumatized by the experience, the successful trauma representation should provide compelling answers to a bunch of questions. Alexander defines four “critical representations” which are vital for new storytelling, for creating a new master narrative<sup>83</sup>:

*“A. The nature of the pain.* What actually happened – to the particular group or to the wider collectivity of which it is a part?...

*B. The nature of the victim.* What group of persons was affected by this traumatizing pain? Were they particular individuals or groups or “the people” in general? Did a singular and delimited group receive the brunt of pain, or were several groups involved?...

*C. Relation of the trauma victim to the wider audience.* – even when the nature of pain has been crystallized and the identity of the victim established, there is a question of the relation of victims to the wider audience. To what extent do the members of the audience of the trauma representations experience an identity with the immediately victimized group?...

*D. Attribution of responsibility.* In creating a compelling trauma narrative, it is critical to establish the identity of the perpetrator, the “antagonist”. Who actually injured the victim? Who caused the trauma?”<sup>84</sup>

Drawing on these four critical assessments, we can conclude that for a new narrative to be successfully recognized, it is necessary to accomplish these four criteria in trauma representation. We may also assume that even if those criteria are meant for a carrier group, which aims to construct a national trauma within and for its national group, they would also be relevant for a similar trauma representation for an external audience. Thus, we can adopt these four criteria for our analysis of the trauma construction and representation in historical movie, which is aimed at the external audience. Concept of posttraumatic cinema developed by Joshua Hirsch considers “a cinema that not only represents traumatic

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid, pp.13-15

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, pp.13-15

historical events, but also attempts to embody and reproduce trauma for the spectator through its form of narration.”<sup>85</sup> According to Hirsch, societies that have suffered “massive blow” can develop a “discourse of trauma” which in turn would lead to production of cultural works in attempt to represent traumatic event and difficulties of coming to terms with it.<sup>86</sup>

Alexander also adds, that if the ‘meaning work’ takes place in the aesthetic realm, it will be “channeled by specific genres and narratives that aim to produce imaginative identification and emotional catharsis.”<sup>87</sup> This is exactly what the movie does, as it aims to trigger an emotional response to the narrative on the screen and helps identify with the characters, which raises chances for viewers’ recognition. Alexander claims that collective traumas have no geographical or cultural limitations<sup>88</sup>, which correlates to prosthetic memory, which concept also presupposes that memories do not belong exclusively to a particular group anymore. Thus, the trauma representation through a movie has a high possibility to reach understanding and recognition of national trauma narrative from the external audience.

Richard Kearney claims that narrative retelling and remembering might provide cathartic release for victims of trauma and catharsis is one of the most enduring functions of narrative. Narratives help us re-experience the pain of trauma with a certain degree of detachment and release from pressure of trauma, contributing to healing process. Catharsis might be achieved if there is a balance between identification and distance so the viewers do not overempathize the characters as it may lead to over-identification. The key to achieving release of catharsis due to narrative is the balance between identification and distance – so the viewers can re-live the pain ‘as if’ it is happening again, but from the distance, created by actors, plot etc. As Kearney states, “we need story to be struck by horror and history to know the ‘hidden cause’ which occasioned it.”<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Joshua Francis Hirsch, *Afterimage* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004), xi.

<sup>86</sup> Lucy Burke, Simon Faulkner and James Aulich, *The Politics Of Cultural Memory* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2010), pp.1-3

<sup>87</sup> Jeffrey C. Alexander, 'Toward A Theory Of Cultural Trauma', in *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, 1st edn (Berkeley, CA, USA: University of California Press, 2004). pp.15

<sup>88</sup> *ibid* p.27

<sup>89</sup> Richard. Kearney, ‘Narrating Pain: The Power Of Catharsis’, *Paragraph*, 30 (2007), p.63

## Films and cultural/transcultural memory

Adopting Alexander Etkind's terminology, we can divide between the 'hardware' of cultural memory, fixed in stone (monuments, museums etc) and 'software' (which exists in all kinds of texts – historical, literary, cinematic etc).<sup>90</sup> If we look at the Eastern Europe, where the official narrative has been imposed for a long time and national memories were repressed, we may see that new 'software', like memoirs, novels, films are dominating over the 'hard' monuments, memorials and museums.<sup>91</sup> Even if in the Baltic states appear some new memory sites, they are considered to be rather controversial.

Blacker, Etkind and Fedor also emphasize that even though it is common to analyze memory through 'hardware', yet the 'software' texts are also important for cultural memory, because unlike the monuments which are stunted to a particular lieux de memoire, they do not have locations and therefore are much more available.<sup>92</sup> From this we can assume that the cultural texts, may it be a novel, memoirs or a film, can be more effective in making impact on memory. Moreover, cultural memory can sometimes be activated by fictional texts that do not claim for a historical truth, but complex genre of historical film can have truth claims even if they fictionalize.<sup>93</sup>

It is a known fact, that both literature and cinema can manifest individual and collective memory by coding it into "aesthetic forms, such as narrative structures, symbols, and metaphors."<sup>94</sup> Scholars such as Kilbourn, Erll or Kaes acknowledge the importance of cinema as an agent of memory.<sup>95</sup> For Kilbourn, the visual technology of cinema nowadays is what gives existence and meaning to memory.<sup>96</sup> Erll and Nünning account film as effective tool of cultural memory due to its ability to shape the perception of the past and to

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<sup>90</sup> U. Blacker, A. Etkind, J. Fedor "Memory and theory in Eastern Europe" p.5, Etkind "Hard and Soft in Cultural memory"

<sup>91</sup> Uilleam Blacker, Aleksandr Etkind and Julie Fedor, *Memory And Theory In Eastern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p.5

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, p.6

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, p.7

<sup>94</sup> Astrid Erll, 'Traumatic Pasts, Literary Afterlives, And Transcultural Memory: New Directions Of Literary And Media Memory Studies', *Journal of AESTHETICS & CULTURE*, 3 (2011), p.2

<sup>95</sup> Kilbourn (2010), Erll and Nünning (2008), Kaes (1990)

<sup>96</sup> Russell J. A Kilbourn, *Cinema, Memory, Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2010), p.1



help remember this past.<sup>97</sup> For example, Anton Kaes considers films to be more powerful tools for creating identity than textbooks or novels.<sup>98</sup>

Usually we refer to elitist view on memory construct, as political institutions have power to control and impose the official narrative, ‘right’ interpretation of the national past to the people, and this it achieved through the means of mass media. However, it is claimed that academics and journalists can also ‘join the club’ of competition over remembering and interpreting alongside with politicians.<sup>99</sup> Filmmakers in this case can also be considered as agents of memory, as they create movies which also carry a particular ideology and contain a certain narrative, besides adhering to a specific memory discourse. Emotional dimension of movies makes them particularly successful in communicating the narratives and helping remember them, which might also create prosthetic memories of experience, never lived by viewers themselves.

Alison Landsberg claims that from all forms of aesthetic experience, the sensuous in movie (the experiential nature of the spectator’s engagement with the image) makes it different from let’s say, reading.<sup>100</sup> In other words, the sensuous mode of address in a movie, which creates a feeling of “living through”, makes the movie a powerful tool for shaping people’s consciousness.<sup>101</sup> She also claims that the modern cinematic technologies have made identification with filmic images and thereby, acquisition of prosthetic memories much easier, because what people see on the screen, might affect them so significantly that they would incorporate those images as a part of their own experience.<sup>102</sup>

Robert Rosenstone in his account on historical films, writes that modern historical movies are important, because their aim is less entertain or make profits, but “rather to understand the legacy of the past” and the past that they create, is not the same as “provided by

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<sup>97</sup> Astrid Erll, Ansgar Nünning and Sara B Young, *Cultural Memory Studies* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), p.5

<sup>98</sup> Anton Kaes, 'History And Film: Public Memory In The Age Of Electronic Dissemination', *History and Memory*, 2 (1990), pp.111-114

<sup>99</sup> Astrid Erll, Ansgar Nünning and Sara B Young, *Cultural Memory Studies* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), pp.174-176

<sup>100</sup> Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), p.28

<sup>101</sup> Ibid, p.29

<sup>102</sup> Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), p.32

traditional history, but it also should be called history”.<sup>103</sup> Rosenstone was among the first historians who argued about the importance of research of historical films because they, both documentary and fiction, are an important source of historical knowledge for general public.<sup>104</sup> He also claimed that unlike the ‘proper’ history which claims for historical truth, historical movies simplify the past and turn it into an uncomplicated narrative<sup>105</sup>, not only bear witness to important events but represent them in much more attractive way than any other form of historical discourse, such as academic book or novel<sup>106</sup>.

Following Antony Smith’s argument about nationalism, we can adopt his concept of ‘myth-engine’, which is an instrument for shaping a national identity, and consists of a “complex of histories, myths and symbols that invent, justify and reinforce national identity”.<sup>107</sup> As historical movies also employ the language of cultural myth, symbols and narratives, they can be considered as powerful ‘myth-engine’ as well.<sup>108</sup> Historical movies, especially those openly aimed not only at domestic viewers, but also at the external audience, contribute to the emergence of “global cinematic version of history” by influencing and shaping the historical knowledge of a world audience.<sup>109</sup>

Movies about Holocaust are an example, of how film can serve as an instrument helping to assimilate the memory of Holocaust into a popular consciousness. Films can function as lessons of history, which educate us and teach to remember the historical event, through deep emotional affiliation with the story shown on the screen. Memory is deeply emotional matter, thus movies due to their particular cinematic language are the best tools for communicating memory to social groups and generations, who never experienced the events themselves.

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<sup>103</sup> Robert A Rosenstone, *Revisioning History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), pp.4-5

<sup>104</sup> Leen Engelen and Roel Vande Winkel, *Perspectives On European Film And History* (Gent: Academia Press, 2007), p.5

<sup>105</sup> Rosenstone cited in Ewa Mazierska, *European Cinema And Intertextuality* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). p.12

<sup>106</sup> Robert A Rosenstone, *History On Film/Film On History* (Harlow, England: Longman/Pearson, 2006).

<sup>107</sup> Antony Smith cited in Leen Engelen and Roel Vande Winkel, *Perspectives On European Film And History* (Gent: Academia Press, 2007), p.6

<sup>108</sup> Leen Engelen and Roel Vande Winkel, *Perspectives On European Film And History* (Gent: Academia Press, 2007), p.7

<sup>109</sup> Ibid, p.8

Alison Landsberg explains what in particular makes a historical movie able to provoke political consciousness. It is the formal strategies that are employed in movies - “techniques and strategies at play – both formal and narrative – that prevent overidentification with victims to the point of resignation.”<sup>110</sup> She explains that specific techniques of both filming and editing are used in order to foster identification with a character or point of view, for example a technique of close up – when a camera focuses on a person’s face and shows whole range of emotions, then the viewer “cannot but feel his or her own body respond in kind”.<sup>111</sup> But Landsberg also warns that although fostering identification is not difficult, it does not necessarily produce cognition<sup>112</sup>. Historical films often induce viewers to identify with the victims in a way that produces resignation and incapacitation rather than politicization.<sup>113</sup> What she means is that those movies fail which create the powerful sense of identification with the characters and immerse viewers into the story, yet do not break their illusion and do not offer a possibility of critical response. Landsberg argues that the movie should include some moments of narrative interruption, that would “break the illusion, prompt questions and critiques, and compel self-evaluation” and thus product a political consciousness.<sup>114</sup> To follow her argument, we will explore the narrative flow in *In the Crosswind* and analyze its techniques of filming and editing.

## Methodology

This section describes the methodological approach to this study organization. This thesis aims to explain, how *In the Crosswind*, using cinematic visual techniques and methods and through prosthetic memory, contributes to European discourse of Stalinism crimes and helps communicate the story of Estonian experience of deportations to the foreign audience, contributing to transcultural memory of Stalinism crimes. The analysis thus will be focused on ways how the movie tries to communicate the trauma narrative and achieve recognition from the audience by subscribing to or challenging the hegemonic discourse on

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<sup>110</sup> Alison Landsberg, 'Politics And The Historical Film', in *Companion to the historical film*, 1st edn (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), p.15

<sup>111</sup> Ibid, p.15

<sup>112</sup> Ibid, p.16

<sup>113</sup> Ibid, p.16

<sup>114</sup> Ibid, p.16

Stalinist crimes, by using visual and audio techniques, employing narrative tools, appealing to cultural symbols and images, providing intertextual references to the texts that audience already knows and reconstructing the trauma – for external audience to ‘live through’ this experience and identify themselves with it, recognize it and adopt as part of its own experience through the prosthetic memory. All this as the final result might influence the viewers’ own ways of thinking about narrated event or historical period and thus help establishing a transnational memory of communist crimes – which in the end, as we argue, is the ultimate goal of the film (besides saving a memory of survivors in national framework for younger generations).

Jaworski and Coupland suggest that the concept of discourse should not be limited to a linguistic conception, but can be extended to a non-linguistic conception of discourse. Thus a discourse analysis might include non-linguistic semiotic systems and non-verbal discourse modes such as painting, sculpture, photography, music and film.<sup>115</sup> Approach of visual Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) would allow to put the text into a socio-political context and to analyze how a film contributes to meaning-making process and how it subscribes to the dominant discourse or challenges it, transcending the alternative discourse and ideology. According to Teun van Dijk, films can be objects of CDA because they are influential tools in shaping the society.<sup>116</sup> Ruth Wodak explains, that “a fully ‘critical’ account of discourse would thus require a theorization and description of both the social processes and structures which give rise to the production of a text, and of the social structures and processes within which individuals or groups as social historical subjects, create meanings in their interaction with texts. Consequently, 3 concepts figure indispensably in all CDA: the concept of power, the concept of history, and the concept of ideology”.<sup>117</sup> Therefore, using visual CDA method would allow to analyze how the film discourse subscribes to or challenges the discourse of Stalinist crimes in Eastern and Western Europe in order to explain the possible reception of the film’s ideological message. For this the study incorporates analysis of speeches of European politicians such as Vaira

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<sup>115</sup> Adam Jaworski and Nikolas Coupland, *The Discourse Reader* (London: Routledge, 1999), p.6

<sup>116</sup> Teun A. van Dijk, 'Critical Discourse Analysis', in *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, 1st edn (Malden, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 2001), p.361

<sup>117</sup> Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer, *Methods Of Critical Discourse Analysis* (London: SAGE, 2001), pp.3-4

Viķe-Freiberga and Toomas Hendrik Ilves and touches upon the recent debates in European Parliament over condemnation of communist crimes. This part relies also on studies, previously conducted on European communist crimes discourse by Maria Mäliksoo and others. Analysis of social structures and processes which gave rise to the film also includes discussion of Estonian memory politics and national trauma narrative. It is also necessary to look at film production, date and circumstances of release of the film. To find basis for my arguments, I would also include international reviews and reception at international festivals to discuss reception of the movie.

Besides, CDA employs the concept of intertextuality for analysis of relationships with other texts, which is not pursued in other methods.<sup>118</sup> As Engelen and Winkel claim, intertextuality is central to the understanding of the meaning of media contents and every cinematic text must be read “in relation to a variety of others texts, this is in relation to an intertextual network.”<sup>119</sup> They add that “intertextuality includes relations between ‘text’ and discourses, contributing to the meaning(s) of a (film) text at a specific moment of time”.

<sup>120</sup> A movie as cultural work always depends on other texts, which have been created before and constitute the body of texts (in cultural studies, text can be considered in a broader meaning – a film, an image etc). This body of texts is the one that the audience already knows and referencing to it might enhance the recognition of the film. Engelen and Winkel also add that ongoing political debates, social policies, other social tendencies can also be related to film text.<sup>121</sup> Thus it is also vital to explore the intertextual connections, made in this film, the references to other movies – in our case, it would make sense to look at the popular Holocaust movies, as the discourse of the Holocaust is competing with the discourse of Stalin’s crimes – thus, if our movie adheres to the Stalinism crimes discourse, we should analyze what references and in what ways are made to the popular Holocaust movies in order to offer some sense of familiarity, recognition to the audience. Same it is

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid, p.15

<sup>119</sup> Leen Engelen and Roel Vande Winkel, *Perspectives On European Film And History* (Gent: Academia Press, 2007), p.23

<sup>120</sup> Ibid, pp.26-27

<sup>121</sup> Leen Engelen and Roel Vande Winkel, *Perspectives On European Film And History* (Gent: Academia Press, 2007), pp.26-27

important to see how the film narrative follows Estonian narratives of deportation, which one can find in studies of autobiographical accounts of survivors. This would allow us to see what was used from 'domestic' narrative and what exactly was borrowed from other narratives of trauma (Holocaust, Katyn or Holodomor) in order to communicate the story.

As a cultural work, a movie also uses some cultural symbols and images that have particular meaning in a particular culture. As we analyze *In the Crosswind* in a transnational/transcultural framework, then we should explore, which images and symbols are used in order to communicate the message, to put meaning to the images and to appeal to cultural codes of the audience. This would be an iconographic analysis of the images of the movie. Iconography is also a vital part of the media approach to film analysis, as it is defined as an important aspect of genre.<sup>122</sup> Therefore we look at filmic codes and signs in an attempt to explain what they might denote or connote and explore the symbolic language of the film which helps narrate the trauma. It is also connected with intertextuality, as the film borrows some images and symbols from other films and texts about trauma which might enhance the recognition of the story.

Steve Campsell's GCSE Film Analysis Guide is used to analyze the film language of *In the Crosswind*. According to this analysis guide, we should explore the signs, codes and conventions used to create meaning for the images of film; mise-en-scène, shot types, camera angle and movement, lighting, sound and music – all technical elements, used in creating a movie; and narrative and iconography as essential aspects of genre. However, according to the needs of research topic, we are restrained with research question of how the national trauma and victimhood are constructed and represented with the cinematic tools. Therefore the analysis would include only the elements of film language, which are believed to be communicative of trauma representation in the film (visual trope of tableau vivants, choice of actors, costumes and props, prologue and epilogue text etc).

Narrative analysis is also an important tradition within discourse analysis.<sup>123</sup> We should analyze the movie narrative, as it will help understand how the different elements, such as

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<sup>122</sup> Steve Campsell, *Media - GCSE Film Analysis Guide* (3)

<sup>123</sup> Adam Jaworski and Nikolas Coupland, *The Discourse Reader* (London: Routledge, 1999), p.25

storyline, problematic, narrator voice, characters, actions and settings, flashback and storyline together contribute to the meaning making.<sup>124</sup> As the movie audience due to the art-house genre is not limited by emotional viewers, but also appeals to the audience intellectually, we should take into account both aspects in our analysis – how the film influences the viewers emotionally and how it engages them intellectually. It is also important to analyze if the film avoids offering over-identification with the characters and keeps some distance, as it is important for correct ‘living through’ the story and cathartic function of the narrative.

Besides the effects of “seeing it with own eyes” and “living through”, what makes movie so powerful emotionally, it its music. Many scholars agree that music helps engage in a film. Annabel J. Cohen claims that music sets the mood and helps to bridge “the gap between the screen and the audience”, adding an ‘emotional dimension’.<sup>125</sup> Hoeckner et al in their study of music in melodrama, suggest that melodramatic music creates the “inclination to identify with the character”.<sup>126</sup> Marilyn G. Boltz in her studies of film soundtracks also confirms the ability of music to influence the perception and interpretation of information in the movie.<sup>127</sup> From this we can conclude that the music plays a significant role in film and thus our study will soundtrack of *In the Crosswind*.

Stemming from the research aim, we want to explore how all elements of the film, mentioned above, communicate trauma narrative and does it in a way which would find understanding and reception among the foreign audience. For this we employ the trauma theory with J. Alexander’s four critical questions for trauma representation and analyze how all elements such as cinematic techniques, narrative structure, iconography and intertextuality help communicate the trauma and memory of deportations and engage the audience both intellectually and emotionally, avoiding overidentification and leading to catharsis.

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<sup>124</sup> Seymour Benjamin Chatman, *Story And Discourse* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978). pp.15–29, 43–51.

<sup>125</sup> Annabel J. Cohen, “Film Music and the Unfolding Narrative,” in *Language, Music, and the Brain*, vol. 10, Strüngmann Forum Reports (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013), 175.

<sup>126</sup> Berthold Hoeckner and others, 'Film Music Influences How Viewers Relate To Movie Characters.', *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, 5 (2011), 146-153

<sup>127</sup> Marilyn G. Boltz, 'The Cognitive Processing Of Film And Musical Soundtracks', *Memory & Cognition*, 32 (2004), 1194-1205

## CHAPTER TWO: ESTONIA IN EUROPEAN MEMORY DISCOURSE OF WORLD WAR II

As any product of cultural memory is a product of power relations, it is important to see how and why it has emerged in a particular form, how the film as cultural product subscribes to the memory discourse and thus which ideology transcends. As Joshua Hirsch asserts, the way how a cultural work narrates trauma depends heavily on the conditions of work's production and reception, because even though the films show past, they also respond to the present with its ideological conditions for trauma interpretation.<sup>128</sup> Therefore it would be beneficial to look in more details at Estonian memory politics and narrative of deportations trauma.

### Historical background of deportations narrative

Before moving to analysis of the film, it is necessary to provide a historical background on period of the Second World War and deportations and its reflection in Estonian cultural memory. The Second World War for Estonia began on June 22, 1941 when in operation Barbarossa, Germany invaded the Soviet Union. It was a break of alliance, made with Molotov-Ribbentrop pact between Moscow and Berlin in 1939, which divided the spheres of interest and led to Soviet occupation of Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland.<sup>129</sup> But the sovietization of Estonia started in 1940 when the territory was occupied with Russian troops and government apparatus was replaced to held elections sooner than as them should be. The incorporation of Estonia into the Soviet Union was met with resistance and in order to secure the new regime, the mass terror was implemented. Then arrests, killings and deportations started – purges of ideologically incorrect 'enemies of people'. All patriotic activity such as participating in War of Liberation or being a member of Defense League instantly became a crime. Sometimes it was enough to deport the whole family due to belonging to the circle of 'class enemy'.<sup>130</sup> National Defense League (*Kaitseliit*) was an

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<sup>128</sup> Joshua Francis Hirsch, *Afterimage* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004), p.11

<sup>129</sup> Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), p.155

<sup>130</sup> Aigi Rahi-Tamm, 'Deportations In Estonia, 1941-1951', in *Soviet Deportations In Estonia: Impact And Legacy. Articles And Life Histories*, 1st edn (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2007), pp. 9-11.



organization, which aimed at protection the government and security of citizens. In the first year of Soviet occupation in Estonia, from total 8000 people arrested, only 200 survived.<sup>131</sup>

Estonian historian Mart Laar writes, that preparations for the terror had started much earlier than Estonia was occupied and were aimed at suppressing any possible resistance and get rid of the national elites and intellectuals to weaken the national identity. Even the Chief Commander of the Estonian Defence Forces, Johan Laidoner and the President of the Republic of Estonia, Konstantin Päts did not escape the deportation fate and both died in exile.<sup>132</sup>

Though there were some first signs of danger in Estonia already in 1930s, not many people were conscious of them and most of Estonians continued to live in their homes. Preparations for the first deportation started in winter of 1940-1941. The first deportation started in the early morning of June 14, 1941 when thousands of Estonians were woke up by NKVD officers and armed soldiers, pounding on their doors. People had to gather their things fast and get into trucks, and they often were not able to pack the most essential belongings or food.<sup>133</sup> The people were only read aloud the decree that they are subjected to deportation without any legal court process and decision. Then they were put into cattle cars and brought to railway stations. Mart Laar emphasizes the cruelty of officers and soldiers, who forced even heavily pregnant women and seriously ill men to get into trucks.<sup>134</sup> Then on June 17 the first trains carried the people away to Siberia. The first casualties happened already on the way to Siberia due to extremely difficult conditions in the cattle wagons.

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<sup>131</sup> Tiina Kirss, Ene Kõresaar and Marju Lauristin, *She Who Remembers Survives* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2004).pp.79-81

<sup>132</sup> Mart Laar, *Fact Sheet June 2006. Estonia Today. Deportation From Estonia In 1941 And 1949.*, 1st edn (Press and Information Department, Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs., 2006)  
<[http://vm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/web-static/128/Deportations\\_from\\_Estonia.pdf](http://vm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/web-static/128/Deportations_from_Estonia.pdf)> [accessed 12 May 2015].

<sup>133</sup> Tiina Kirss, Ene Kõresaar and Marju Lauristin, *She Who Remembers Survives* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2004).pp.79-81

<sup>134</sup> Mart Laar, *Fact Sheet June 2006. Estonia Today. Deportation From Estonia In 1941 And 1949.*, 1st edn (Press and Information Department, Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs., 2006)  
<[http://vm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/web-static/128/Deportations\\_from\\_Estonia.pdf](http://vm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/web-static/128/Deportations_from_Estonia.pdf)> [accessed 12 May 2015].

Many more women survived in 1941 deportations than men, because chances to survive were much higher even in starving villages and kolkhozes in Novosibirsk and Kirov than in polar prison camps. Estonian men were mostly sent to those camps, where the majority died already in their first winter and the rest were interrogated and shot by investigative commissions.<sup>135</sup>

After the first deportation, the plans were to continue resettle the people but they were interrupted by Germany's attack on Soviet Union. The experience of first years of Soviet occupation made many Estonians meet the Germans as liberators, but then just another period of occupation began, which took life of another 7,000 of Estonian citizens, including 1,000 of Estonian Jews.<sup>136</sup> However, in a short time the people understood that Hitler's plans had nothing to do with the independence of the Baltic republics. Then in a few years in 1944 the Soviet rule returned and the second wave of deportations approached. After the Germans left Estonia, there was an attempt to restore independence, which failed due to Soviet repressions.

In 1946 -1948 lasted the preparations for the second deportation, which would have allowed to "eliminate kulaks as a class" and complete collectivization.<sup>137</sup> During the Operation Priboi on March 25, 1949 more than 20,000 of people were 'resettled in perpetuity' and 90% of deported during the second wave were women and children.<sup>138</sup> They were families of so called 'bandits' and 'bourgeois nationalists'. This time about 70,000 had already fled abroad in 1943-1944 and escaped the deportation.

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<sup>135</sup> Mart Laar, *Fact Sheet June 2006. Estonia Today. Deportation From Estonia In 1941 And 1949.*, 1st edn (Press and Information Department, Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs., 2006)  
<[http://vm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/web-static/128/Deportations\\_from\\_Estonia.pdf](http://vm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/web-static/128/Deportations_from_Estonia.pdf)> [accessed 12 May 2015].

<sup>136</sup> David J Smith, *Estonia: Independence And European Integration* (London: Routledge, 2001). p.35

<sup>137</sup> Mart Laar, *Fact Sheet June 2006. Estonia Today. Deportation From Estonia In 1941 And 1949.*, 1st edn (Press and Information Department, Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs., 2006)  
<[http://vm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/web-static/128/Deportations\\_from\\_Estonia.pdf](http://vm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/web-static/128/Deportations_from_Estonia.pdf)> [accessed 12 May 2015].

<sup>138</sup> Tiina Kirss, 'Survivorship And The Eastern Exile: Estonian Women's Life Narratives Of The 1941 And 1949 Siberian Deportations', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 36 (2005), p.22

During the Soviet time there has been forced forgetting and collective amnesia, as the silence about deportations was caused by fear of possible new deportations and repressions. Also there was a desire to ‘conceal stigmatization’ and integrate into society, but victims often faced ignorance and indifference.<sup>139</sup> After the collapse, the repressions and a short interwar period of independence became the keystones in construction of the collective past. This past began to be remembered and commemorated in 1989-1990s, firstly at the memory sites, but later all around the country. The memory of deportations became social and the narrow circle of repressed people started sharing their memories. The next step included this narrative into history textbooks.<sup>140</sup>

The acceptance of narrative of deportations was fast, however it started to quickly losing its significance, especially for younger generations. Also in society appeared a social opposition to victims of deportations, who were recognized and received reparations. In the end, the opinion is that the repressed are not understood in Estonia and they strive to keep and share their experience so it doesn’t disappear from collective memory. After the collapse of the Soviet regime and declaration of it as criminal, the question of legitimacy of positive memories about that period became problematic. The Soviet annexation and whole period of Soviet rule became something to be ashamed of and there was no longer ‘legitimate’ right to remember the happy memories from that time. The problem appeared – how to interpret the Soviet experience, and how to deal with Soviet nostalgia experienced by people born in Brezhnev era, who did not experience deportations and have their childhood memories from that time.<sup>141</sup>

Estonian scholars such as Tiina Kirss, Ene Kõresaar, Marju Lauristin among others have collected and studied the life stories of Estonian women-deportees who survived in Siberia. As the narrator in our film is also Estonian woman Erna, it would be useful to look closer at how the film narrative subscribes to the narrative of survivors. The traditional pattern of

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<sup>139</sup> Terje Anepaio, 'Reception Of The Topic Of Repressions In The Estonian Society', *Pro Ethnologia* 14.

<sup>140</sup> Terje Anepaio, 'Reception Of The Topic Of Repressions In The Estonian Society', *Pro Ethnologia* 14.

<sup>141</sup> Kristi Grünberg, 'Remembering The Soviet Past In Estonia. The Case Of The Nostalgic Comedy “The Light Blue Wagon”', *KEYWORDS. Academic Journal for New Research in Humanities and Social Sciences in the Baltic States*.

deportation life histories includes life before the deportation night, the journey to Siberia, sufferings in deportation and return home.<sup>142</sup> Obviously, most Siberian narratives are sad not only because of remembering the tragic events, but also because these events have left an imprint on the life and life views of victims.<sup>143</sup>

In victims' narrative one can find some repetitive elements, which are obviously common for most stories of deportation, for instance, most describe their last view of home as unforgettable and in deportation stories there is usually not much regret over lost belongings or fortune but a strong mourning for a lost home.<sup>144</sup> The survivors describe their conditions of slave labor and that it was of very primitive nature. Narratives of Estonian women-survivors of 1941 deportation include experience of rape, attempted rape and sexual submission at threat of being deported further East and death of children in Siberian conditions.<sup>145</sup> They underline the feeling of powerlessness when witnessing young people dying, especially children and young people. Starvation and backbreaking labor are central elements of all deportation narratives. Also victims mention the intellectual starvation alongside with hunger, when there was nothing to do during the long and dark winter evenings and they had to exchange the stories.<sup>146</sup>

In most narratives one can find descriptions of a destiny companion (saatusekaaslane) who were important people in Siberia, while being separated from family members. Also, it is frequently mentioned the topic of cooperation between women and barter of clothes for food. Another frequent topic in women's narrative was the stealing of food for children's survival and punishment for that. And at the same time, it is often mentioned that Estonian women's familiarity with hard work and capability to do 'man's job' such as lumberjacking has given them better chances to survive; moreover, a solid work has brought them recognition and respect, and in the long run, better working conditions or favors.

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<sup>142</sup> Tiina Kirss, Ene Kõresaar and Marju Lauristin, *She Who Remembers Survives* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2004), p.67

<sup>143</sup> Ibid, p.67

<sup>144</sup> Ibid, pp.70-72

<sup>145</sup> Tiina Kirss, 'Survivorship And The Eastern Exile: Estonian Women's Life Narratives Of The 1941 And 1949 Siberian Deportations', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 36 (2005), p.22

<sup>146</sup> Tiina Kirss, Ene Kõresaar and Marju Lauristin, *She Who Remembers Survives* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2004), pp.70-72

In all Siberian narratives the feelings about departure and return home occupy the main places. However, after the return home, many deportees noticed that there was no longer happiness of being free again, but a stigma of deportation instead and disappointing understanding that they now were very different from people stayed in Estonia.<sup>147</sup> Everything discussed above will be incorporated into analysis of the film narrative in the following chapters to discover how the film subscribes to Estonian women survivors narrative of deportations and which elements of the narrative are borrowed.

### **Estonian memory politics of ‘becoming European’**

We should start with sketching a European mnemonic map in order to understand the peculiarities of Estonian memory regime. As Maria Mäklsoo suggests in her study of European collective memory, at least four mnemonic communities in relation to WWII can be distinguished: an Atlantic-Western European, German, East-Central European, and Russian one.<sup>148</sup> To put it into more details, each community focuses on their own fixed points of war narrative. The Western-European narrative focuses on D-Day of 1944 and the Allied Victory in Europe on 8 May 1945, the German articulates traumas resulting from bombings and defeat in war, the Russian obviously highlights a costly victory over fascism and the East-Central European narrative is build on memory of Nazi and Soviet occupations and repressions.<sup>149</sup> Following Mäklsoo’s argumentation, we also appeal to “underlying intellectual incongruity in relation to the criminal inheritance of the two totalitarian regimes of the twentieth’s century Europe” and argue that the imbalance of recognition of Nazi and Soviet crimes alongside with reluctance to include Eastern European experience of Soviet occupation to European collective remembrance constitutes

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<sup>147</sup> Tiina Kirss, Ene Kõresaar and Marju Lauristin, *She Who Remembers Survives* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2004), pp.70-72

<sup>148</sup> Maria Mäklsoo, 'The Discourse Of Communist Crimes In The European Memory Politics Of World War II', *Paper presented at the Ideology and Discourse Analysis conference Rethinking Political Frontiers and Democracy in a New World Order*, 2008, p.2

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid*, p.2

potential threat to European consolidation and unity.<sup>150</sup> Mälksoo and others state that European collective remembrance can be characterized as dominated by traditionally West-centric vision of history.<sup>151</sup> European foundation myth of the Holocaust and its singularity as the crime against humanity as the ultimate legacy of the WWII has left not much space for any alternative narratives. While recognition of the Holocaust has been institutionalized and internationalized, the Stalinism crimes have not received even comparable political attention.<sup>152</sup> Moreover, the participation in the Holocaust remembrance community and ‘memory work’ on national memory has become a ‘part of the entry ticket to the EU’ for the post-communist countries. However, the fact that in the countries such as Poland, Estonia, Latvia or Lithuania, exist their own powerful memory communities with a different narrative, which focuses on the victimhood of their respective nation, contributes to what has been called ‘mnemonic wars’ in Europe. More particularly, such mnemonic war is still going on over the recognition of the Soviet crimes during the WWII and in its aftermath.

Mälksoo in her study focuses on Poland and the Baltic Three as the most active Eastern European states, which attempt to “enlarge the mnemonic vision of the ‘united’ Europe” by challenging the dominant Western understanding of the WWII legacy with their ‘subaltern’ narratives.<sup>153</sup> Her main claim is that those attempts to “wrench the ‘European mnemonic map’ apart” should be considered as Polish and Baltic politics of ‘becoming European’ – namely, seeking recognition of their subaltern narratives and at the same time refusing to accept the hegemonic Western European narrative of “what ‘Europe’ is all about”.<sup>154</sup> Poland and the Baltic Three call for equal remembering of their pasts and inclusion of their historical experience into European collective (or rather transnational) remembrance of the

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<sup>150</sup> Maria Mälksoo, 'The Discourse Of Communist Crimes In The European Memory Politics Of World War II', *Paper presented at the Ideology and Discourse Analysis conference Rethinking Political Frontiers and Democracy in a New World Order*, 2008, p.1

<sup>151</sup> M. Mälksoo, 'The Memory Politics Of Becoming European: The East European Subalterns And The Collective Memory Of Europe', *European Journal of International Relations*, 15 (2009), p.654

<sup>152</sup> Ibid, p.654

<sup>153</sup> Ibid, p.654

<sup>154</sup> Ibid, p.654

war.<sup>155</sup> The root of the conflict lies in reluctance of the ‘old Europeans’ to listen to those counter-narratives and to recognize this experience, not to mention adopting it as a part of pan-European memory.<sup>156</sup> The reason of such irresponsiveness lies in the nature of Baltic and Polish memory politics, which focuses on controversial and debatable comparison between Nazi and Stalinist crimes, which in turn questions the singularity of *the* Holocaust and uniqueness of Nazi crimes.<sup>157</sup> However, those attempts, as Mälksoo explains, are closely connected to the issue of security, which these Eastern European states seek to achieve through increasing Eurointegration.<sup>158</sup> Russia as the great Estonian ‘Other’ and historical successor of the Soviet Union, has always been present in these debates over the past, as Baltic and Russian national narratives contain self-excluding elements and this serves as basis of permanent identity conflict.<sup>159</sup> Even after the Baltic Three have officially become a part of a ‘big European family’ on institutional level (with EU and NATO accession), their identity discourse has solidified and the ‘othering’ of Russia remained behind; moreover, when Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania become disappointed with Europe’s reluctance to accept their historical narrative and “connivance at Russia’s wrongdoings”, it has only intensified the ‘othering’ tendency.<sup>160</sup>

As Eva-Clarita Pettai explains, collective memory has always played a significant role in Estonian politics, as on discursive level the “long ‘hidden and forbidden’ mass individual memory of the Stalinist terror, of lost relatives and statehood” was important for externalization of communism and strengthening national identity in fight for independence and this memory later turned on a dominant ‘memory regime’ of Estonia.<sup>161</sup> Scholars, who study Estonian collective memory and memory politics, argue that their main focus is on the national victimhood, which is a cornerstone of Estonian “dominant narrative and state-

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<sup>155</sup> M. Mälksoo, 'The Memory Politics Of Becoming European: The East European Subalterns And The Collective Memory Of Europe', *European Journal of International Relations*, 15 (2009), p.656

<sup>156</sup> Ibid, p.656

<sup>157</sup> Ibid, p.656

<sup>158</sup> Ibid, p.657

<sup>159</sup> Eiki Berg and Piret Ehin, *Identity And Foreign Policy* (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2009), pp.28-29

<sup>160</sup> Ibid, p.29

<sup>161</sup> Ibid, p.40

supported memory regime”.<sup>162</sup> The emphasis is made on national suffering under the Soviet occupation and from the deportations and mass executions. Emphasizing the experience of deportations, Estonians this way position themselves as victims of history and survivors, which allows them to distance from Russia on the one hand, but on the other it entails them with an academic skepticism regarding ‘victimhood competition’ discourse.<sup>163</sup> As Siobhan Kattago has firmly put this, “After 2007, Estonians seem to have one memory of World War II (1939–1945) and communism (1940–1941 and 1944–1991) emphasizing victimhood, occupation, deportation and national suffering at the hands of two dictatorships and Russians another, emphasizing the Great Patriotic War (1941–1945) liberation, victory and national suffering at the hands of Nazi fascists”.<sup>164</sup> If we look at Western narrative, we know that the main evil is National-Socialism and the Holocaust is unique Nazi crime against humanity. But for post-Soviet Estonia both National-Socialism and communism are evil; moreover communism is the bigger evil.<sup>165</sup> As Kattago explains, Estonian national victimhood is more traumatic than Jewish Holocaust and the Soviet Union is the occupant, not liberator of Eastern Europe.<sup>166</sup> But with time flow, both Nazi and Soviet past are remembered by the older generations of survivors, who are dying out and therefore people more learn about history from cultural memory. Thus photographs, documentaries, images, history books and films are important sources for remembrance and learning from the past.<sup>167</sup> Estonia, as well as Latvia, Lithuania and Poland are appealing to the Western Europe, demanding recognition of their national narratives and in order to achieve this goal, they exert efforts to make their voice heard by all means available. The discourse is usually constructed by political elites, but people like writers, journalists or filmmakers can also contribute to it. So why not to use films to make your voice heard?

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<sup>162</sup> Eva-Clarita Onken, 'The Baltic States And Moscow's 9 May Commemoration: Analysing Memory Politics In Europe', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 59 (2007), p.31

<sup>163</sup> Egle Rindzevičiūtė, 'Towards A Transnational History Of Soviet Deportations. Which Aspects Of The Past Remain Unknown?', *Baltic Worlds*, 2013 <<http://balticworlds.com/towards-a-transnational-history-of-soviet-deportations/?s=memory>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>164</sup> Siobhan Kattago, 'Commemorating Liberation And Occupation: War Memorials Along The Road To Narva', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 39 (2008), p.432

<sup>165</sup> Ibid, p.443

<sup>166</sup> Ibid, p.443

<sup>167</sup> Ibid, p.443



## **The discourse of Stalinism crimes in the European memory politics of World War II**

As any politically endorsed collective memory is the product of power relations<sup>168</sup>, it is important to see how and why it has emerged in a particular form, how the discourse of Stalinism crimes is articulated in Europe and how the film adheres to it or challenges it. As it was mentioned, Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are the most active memory agents in the European Union since their accession. As Maria Mälksoo asserts, after the eastern enlargement, the hegemonic Western European discourse has been challenged by those subaltern narratives.<sup>169</sup> Despite Europe has been united institutionally, there is no consolidation of history and memory of WWII, which is proven by continuous political and academic debates. But how, if ever, those attempts have influenced the EU master narrative and memory politics in the European Parliament?

Here we can refer to Maria Mälksoo's study of discourse of Stalinism crimes in European memory politics. She focuses on speeches of foreign policy establishments in relation to 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WWII in Moscow in 2005.<sup>170</sup> She claims that Baltic memory politics sustains the discourse of 'redemption and suffering'<sup>171</sup> while it involves a problematic compatibility with the discourse of 'forgetting and forgiving' which is often pursued in Western European states.<sup>172</sup> For instance, Latvian president Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga with her comments on Moscow commemoration ceremony has intended to draw attention to the Baltic history among the international community and call for Western support to influence Russia to express its regret.<sup>173</sup> Mälksoo thus suggests that Vīķe-Freiberga thus made an attempt to "enlarge the semiotic field of connotations of World War

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<sup>168</sup> M. Mälksoo, 'The Memory Politics Of Becoming European: The East European Subalterns And The Collective Memory Of Europe', *European Journal of International Relations*, 15 (2009)

<sup>169</sup> Maria Mälksoo, 'The Discourse Of Communist Crimes In The European Memory Politics Of World War II', *Paper presented at the Ideology and Discourse Analysis conference Rethinking Political Frontiers and Democracy in a New World Order*, 2008, p.2

<sup>170</sup> M. Mälksoo, 'The Memory Politics Of Becoming European: The East European Subalterns And The Collective Memory Of Europe', *European Journal of International Relations*, 15 (2009), p.655

<sup>171</sup> Ibid, p.665

<sup>172</sup> Maria Mälksoo, 'The Discourse Of Communist Crimes In The European Memory Politics Of World War II', *Paper presented at the Ideology and Discourse Analysis conference Rethinking Political Frontiers and Democracy in a New World Order*, 2008, p.2.

<sup>173</sup> M. Mälksoo, 'The Memory Politics Of Becoming European: The East European Subalterns And The Collective Memory Of Europe', *European Journal of International Relations*, 15 (2009), pp.655-657

II in the Western public imaginary”.<sup>174</sup> Similar calls were made also by Estonian, Lithuanian and Polish presidents, however, Latvian president’s mnemonic-political initiative was supported by the USA.<sup>175</sup> The discourse of ‘responsibility to acknowledge’ was articulated by the presidents of Poland and Estonia in their respective joint declaration of 18 March 2008.<sup>176</sup> This declaration made a call for reassessment of communist crimes and highlighted responsibility to the victims and their descendants, insisting on establishment of international investigative body.<sup>177</sup>

President of Estonia, Toomas Hendrik Ilves adheres to the discourse of Stalinist crimes condemnation and still awaits apologies from Russia, as follows from his speeches. In 2008, he denied the charges of Russian President Dmitry Medvedev of glorifying Nazism in Estonia and emphasized “unfathomable unwillingness to come to terms” with Soviet crimes from the Russian side.<sup>178</sup> In his speech on anniversary commemoration of March deportations in 2009, Ilves said that crimes of deportations have left a deep wound in Estonian souls and this tragedy has not been overcome yet, thus this is an obligation to remember and come to terms with this trauma.

*„But those who were not directly touched by the tragedy have no right to forget the past. The same goes for those who deny or justify the deportation today. The same goes for those outside Estonia who call upon us to forget the past. I ask them: “Who has given you the right to prescribe to victims of a crime how to deal with their tragedy?”* - President Ilves<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Ibid, pp.655-657

<sup>175</sup> Ibid, pp.665-667

<sup>176</sup> Maria Mälksoo, 'The Discourse Of Communist Crimes In The European Memory Politics Of World War II', *Paper presented at the Ideology and Discourse Analysis conference Rethinking Political Frontiers and Democracy in a New World Order*, 2008, pp.4-5

<sup>177</sup> Ibid, pp.4-5

<sup>178</sup> President.ee, 'AP Interview: Estonian Leader Denies Seeking Russia's Breakup, Says Moscow Won't Accept Past', 2012 <<http://president.ee/en/media/interviews/3311-ap-interview-estonian-leader-denies-seeking-russias-breakup-says-moscow-wont-accept-past/index.html>> [accessed 12 May 2015].

<sup>179</sup> President.ee, 'President Of The Republic At The 60Th Anniversary Commemoration Conference Of The March Deportation Museum Of Occupations', 2012 <<http://president.ee/en/official-duties/speeches/2661-president-of-the-republic-at-the-60th-anniversary-commemoration-conference-of-the-march-deportation-museum-of-occupations/index.html>> [accessed 12 May 2015].

In 2010, on the day of mourning, Ilves drew attention to the Western Europeans' failure to stand against the totalitarian Soviet regime, which resulted in period of occupation of Eastern Europe and highlighted that there is no right to forget about all Soviet crimes.

*"On this national Day of Mourning we must above all think how to prevent such crimes from ever being repeated in Estonia, Europe and the world. We must understand that this time of wanton disrespect for life was made possible only because the world tolerated and appeased totalitarianism. Back then, democratic countries opted for a pragmatic approach and failed to stand up against totalitarianism until it was too late."* - The President of the Republic on the Day of Mourning, 14.06.2010<sup>180</sup>

In his interview to *Der Bund* in 2011, Ilves very sarcastically, 'inexplicitly' called Russia "occupiers" who now demand to give Russian language an official status in Estonia.<sup>181</sup> Later this interview led to outburst of patriotic anger in Russian press, which used the already familiar twist of accusing the Baltic countries in glorifying fascism. In a few years, during his speech at Warsaw University in March, 2014 President Ilves raised the topic of 'new' European Union members such as Estonia, Poland or the Czechs who joined the EU in fact 11 years ago. In his words, the Western Europe does not take seriously those "anti-Russian" Eastern Europeans:

*"If you are from Eastern Europe and you know what you are talking about because you have experienced communism, because you have experienced the secret police or you have experienced what we see right now, Russian aggression, you are not to be taken as seriously as those people who know nothing about it."* - President Ilves at Warsaw University, 19.03.2014<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> President.ee, 'The President Of The Republic On The Day Of Mourning', 2012  
<<http://president.ee/en/official-duties/speeches/2705-the-president-of-the-republic-on-the-day-of-mourning/index.html>> [accessed 12 May 2015].

<sup>181</sup> President.ee, "'It Is Not Sustainable If The Use Of Deception Is Continued.'", *Der Bund*, 2012  
<<http://president.ee/en/media/interviews/6887-qit-is-not-sustainable-if-the-use-of-deception-is-continuedq-der-bund/index.html>> [accessed 12 May 2015].

<sup>182</sup> President.ee, 'President Toomas Hendrik Ilves At Warsaw University, March 19, 2014', 2015  
<<http://president.ee/en/official-duties/speeches/10030-president-toomas-hendrik-ilves-at-warsaw-university-march-19-2014/index.html>> [accessed 12 May 2015].

Just a few days later, on the 65th anniversary of the March deportations, President Ilves explicitly blamed Europe for its indifference towards Russia's aggressive expansionist ambitions and Ukrainian conflict:

*“And again, regrettably, we see fearful or indifferent looks on the faces of the people of Europe, our home, which lacks the guts or ability to stand up to violence... We must forever remember and keep recalling the others for whom the price of a freedom list is much higher than the temporary decrease of economic benefits. We must explain this to our partners in Europe and the world. We must support Ukraine, as members of NATO and the European Union.”* - The President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, on the 65th anniversary of the March deportation, 25.03.2014<sup>183</sup>

What follows from the recent speeches and interviews of the Estonian President, is that they resonate with discourse, pursued by Lithuanian and Latvian colleagues and call “the Old” Europe to incline Russia to apologize for the Soviet crimes, communicating the message of Western indifference towards Russian violence.

Polish and Baltic members of European Parliament are known for critique of the imbalance, mentioned above. However, their attempts to seek condemnation of Soviet crimes on institutional and legal level are far from being successful so far. In what follows, we will explore the official European discourse of Stalinism crimes, articulated through resolutions, declarations and debates in European Parliament.<sup>184</sup> As it was mentioned, the US Congress supported Latvian president's mnemonic stance and passed a resolution in support of Baltic case in July 2005, which was “seeking an acknowledgement and condemnation by the Russian Federation of the Soviet Union's occupation of the Baltic states”.<sup>185</sup> However, the declaration of the European Commission, which was issued later, was more indifferent in its formulations. Later followed the European Parliament resolution, which was entitled

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<sup>183</sup> President.ee, 'The President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, On The 65Th Anniversary Of The March Deportation', 2014 <<http://president.ee/en/official-duties/speeches/9989-the-president-toomas-hendrik-ilves-on-the-65th-anniversary-of-the-march-deportation/index.html>> [accessed 12 May 2015].

<sup>184</sup> Maria Mäliksoo, 'The Discourse Of Communist Crimes In The European Memory Politics Of World War II', *Paper presented at the Ideology and Discourse Analysis conference Rethinking Political Frontiers and Democracy in a New World Order*, 2008, pp.7-8

<sup>185</sup> Ibid, pp.7-8

“The future of Europe sixty years after the Second World War” and was more explicit in its formulations and language, but it caused hot debates in the Europarlament during the period of preparation of the final draft of resolution to be adopted.<sup>186</sup> As Mälksoo explains, there was clash of opinions between MEPs on this account, as some of them regarded the resolution as “a repellent exercise in revisionism and historical distortion,” and as “dreadful falsification of history” aiming to “wipe out the key contribution made by the Soviet Union and its people’s glorious struggle to destroy the brutal killing machine of the Nazi Fascist armies and regimes” and moreover, as “an attempt to silence and defame the glorious and heroic role played by the communists in the anti-fascist struggle”.<sup>187</sup>

In 2006, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) adopted the resolution which “explicitly condemned the crimes committed by totalitarian communist regimes.”<sup>188</sup> But as Mälksoo explains further, the PACE’s draft recommendation calling on European governments, did not obtain the necessary two-thirds majority of the votes, and in the end, the final text even did not mention the Soviet Union.<sup>189</sup> Thus, a similar declaration of condemnation of communist regime crimes was not even considered by European member states. Another unsuccessful example might be the fail of initiative of Hungarian and Lithuanian MEPs to suggest the European Parliament to ban the communist symbols of sickle and hammer in the same manner as the swastika is banned in Europe.<sup>190</sup>

After 2004 EU enlargement, there was a call to make August 23 a European Day of Remembrance for “the victims of all totalitarian and authoritarian regimes”.<sup>191</sup> In 2009, the European Parliament proposed a resolution on “European conscience and totalitarianism”, where the date of August 23 was suggested for commemoration of both victims of Nazism and Stalinism. The idea to set up such commemoration date stemmed back to 2008, when it was put forward with a declaration of the Europarlament. Also this proposal was put

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid, pp.7-8

<sup>187</sup> Ibid, pp.7-8

<sup>188</sup> Ibid, p.8

<sup>189</sup> Ibid, p.9

<sup>190</sup> Ibid, p.9

<sup>191</sup> Anne Wæhrens, 'Is Soviet Communism A Trans-European Experience? Politics Of Memory In The European Parliament, 2004-2009', *Baltic Worlds*, 4 (2014), 19-26 <<http://balticworlds.com/is-soviet-communism-a-trans-european-experience/?s=memory>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

forward in “Prague Declaration on European Conscience and Communism”, which pursued the goal to honor the victims of both totalitarian regimes.<sup>192</sup> The final result was proclaiming August 23 a “Europe-wide Day of Remembrance for the victims of all totalitarian and authoritarian regimes” in the European Parliament resolution in 2009.<sup>193</sup> But this resolution also provoked disputes over the date and European memory of Stalinism. The strong opposition was shown by Yehuda Bauer who is proponent of transnationalization of Holocaust memory and who called the resolution “totally unacceptable” and comparison of Soviet and Nazi crimes as a “distortion of history”.<sup>194</sup> The European Parliament broke into parts, as the left wing was strongly against condemnation of communist crimes, while the right wing was rather supporting the idea of common commemoration.<sup>195</sup> However, as the result, the European Parliament did not succeed in improving the imbalance of attitude towards the Stalinist crimes, which can be proven by a limited number of states who adopted August 23 as commemoration day – those are Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Poland, Hungary, and Sweden.<sup>196</sup> From this we can see that the Day of Remembrance so far is still more Eastern European date.

Analyzing the European discourse on communist legacy, a case of debates over another historical movie is also worth mentioning. “The Soviet Story”, produced by Latvian film director Edvīns Šnore in 2008, is a documentary dedicated to the most horrific moments of the Soviet history, such as Gulag, Ukrainian Holodomor, Katyn massacre and controversy of Soviet and Nazi collaboration. The documentary’s visual language is shocking due to obsessive usage of archive footages with the scenes of atrocities. The movie production was supported by the Union for Europe of the Nations.<sup>197</sup> What makes it even more interesting are the conditions of its premiere and reception, as “The Soviet Story” first time demonstration took place at the European Parliament and immediately caused literally a storm of critique. It received recognition in the Baltic states and Eastern Europe, but there

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<sup>192</sup> *ibid*

<sup>193</sup> *ibid*

<sup>194</sup> *ibid*

<sup>195</sup> *ibid*

<sup>196</sup> *ibid*

<sup>197</sup> Martiņš Kaprāns, 'Hegemonic Representations Of History And Digital Agency: Giving Meaning To 'The Soviet Story' On SNS', *SSRN Journal*

was a harsh criticism and condemnation as “anti-Russian” work from the Russian side<sup>198</sup>. Martiņš Kaprāns in his account on this documentary asserts that the way how “The Soviet Story” was produced and received makes this film a “spectacular act of political communication”.<sup>199</sup> Having in mind Estonian (as well as Latvian, Lithuanian or Polish) alternative discourse on communist crimes and ‘subaltern narratives’, one may conclude that “The Soviet Story” expressed concerns of Eastern European anti-communist political elites and brought attention to the Western European reluctance to include the Soviet crimes to a common European narrative. Kaprāns adds that “The Soviet Story” has contributed to the discourse of a common European memory, “recognition of the Holocaust and Stalinist crimes as morally and legally equal wrongdoing has been at the very heart of this transnational discourse”.<sup>200</sup>

From all this we may draw some conclusions regarding the European discourse on Stalinist crimes. Despite numerous attempts of Baltic and Polish political elites to achieve a constructive dialogue and obtain a solid institutional and legal basis for status of communist crimes, the dominant European discourse is still focused on the singularity of the Holocaust and regards those attempts rather as “dreadful falsification of history”. Therefore, the following movie analysis should put our case study film into a framework of this discourse and explore if it subscribes to or challenges this hegemonic discourse.

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<sup>198</sup> *ibid*

<sup>199</sup> *ibid*

<sup>200</sup> Martiņš Kaprāns, 'Hegemonic Representations Of History And Digital Agency: Giving Meaning To 'The Soviet Story' On SNS', *SSRN Journal*

### CHAPTER THREE: ANALYSIS OF *IN THE CROSSWIND*

#### General information about *In the Crosswind*

*In the Crosswind* is Estonian full-length feature film released in 2014, directed by Martti Helde who also contributed as a screenwriter. The film production was supported by production company Allfilm in association with the Estonian Film Institute, Estonian Cultural Endowment, Estonian Ministry of Defense, Estonian Ministry of Culture, Estonian World Council and Estonian American Council.<sup>201</sup> This suggests that the topic of the Estonian director's debut has a significant meaning in Estonian society, as many Estonian institutions have made a contribution to the movie production.

Speaking of a topic choice for his movie, Martti Helde explains that originally *In the Crosswind* must have been a short documentary film, but during the Thessaloniki documentary pitching forum the audience and their future distributor had changed his mind in favor of a full length feature film.<sup>202</sup> He adds, that has always been interested in history: "There are so many untold stories from pre- and post-war times that need to be told and remembered."<sup>203</sup> Helde is concerned with those stories, which are on the edge of disappearance with an older generation and it means that their stories must be shared for younger generations to remember them. Martti himself grew up with those stories, as his grandfather was a survivor from a prison camp, thus such stories matter for him since the young age: "With *In the Crosswind*, I was convinced that four years of commitment was the least that I could give from my side. I did it out of my respect towards my ancestors and those who had to live through it, because thanks to these people we can live more fulfilled lives."<sup>204</sup>

The date of official premiere in cinemas in Estonia was March 27, 2014. In Estonia, March 25 is an official day of mourning in remembrance of the deportation on March 25, 1949.

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<sup>201</sup> Allfilm.ee, "In The Crosswind" 2014', 2015 <<http://allfilm.ee/en/filmid/risttuules-2012-2/>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>202</sup> Martti Helde, "I'm guided by my inner feelings - what gets me going, what is important to create for society" (<http://cineuropa.org/it.aspx?t=interview&l=en&did=265169>, 2015).

<sup>203</sup> *ibid*

<sup>204</sup> *ibid*



Just two days before the premiere, the President of Estonia had stated that “We must explain this to our partners in Europe and the world“, meaning Russian violence and the Eastern Europe experience of Soviet repressive politics, which obviously draws some parallels to the recent Europe-Russia conflict. Even though it would be an overstatement to call the premiere date and circumstances ideologically overloaded, like in case of Russian historical film *Stalingrad* (the premiere of which was itself an event of remembrance in Russia<sup>205</sup>), the choice of the premiere date shows intention to bind the movie to already existing commemoration practice and with this put the film in the framework of cultural memory.

After the official premiere at Toronto Film Festival and status of the best movie in 2014 at home, in many reviews *In the Crosswind* has received positive comments and its reception is best witnessed with a successful festival run and winning nine prizes at eight international festivals in 2014 – 2015<sup>206</sup>. At the Gothenburg movie festival, it took the audience prize, while at the Premiers Plans festival in France it won a special jury prize, which focuses on directors’ first and second full-length features<sup>207</sup>. The film was chosen for its international commercial premiere the French cinemas and it will continue to appear at the major film festivals during 2015.<sup>208</sup> Appearance at the international festivals proves the film’s ambitions to reach foreign audience, thus it is a perfect example of claim for recognition of trauma and attempt to create a transnational memory.

Before moving on with the film analysis, it would be useful to establish the target audience for the movie. The film genre could be defined as historical drama, which implies that the film impacts the viewers emotionally. However, it is not made as a popular blockbuster or in words of Helde “a fast-edited live action deportation drama”<sup>209</sup>, which was a conscious choice but it somehow limits the part of the audience, which consists of emotional viewers.

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<sup>205</sup> Laura Roop, “The Use Of Cultural Memory In Reinforcing Contemporary Russian Patriotism On The Example Of Film *Stalingrad* (2013)” Master thesis, 2014, University of Tartu

<sup>206</sup> News | ERR, “In The Crosswind’: Eight Festivals, Nine Prizes’, 2015 <<http://news.err.ee/v/Culture/ca41629b-fbf4-49b9-b566-fe622d35b7e9>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>207</sup> Ibid

<sup>208</sup> Ibid

<sup>209</sup> News | ERR, ‘Film About June 1941 Deportations Opens’, 2015 <<http://news.err.ee/v/Culture/2e541be5-c770-43a4-a290-17cffb070251>> [accessed 12 May 2015].

Nevertheless, the film is not limited to emotional appeal, as it is similarly important to pay attention to ways how it engages viewers intellectually and which questions it raises for them. Therefore, both aspects of film language – emotional and intellectual – should be included in the film analysis.

We should refer to international reviews in order to see how the film is received abroad. The titles of the reviews suggest some level of recognition of the film's topic, as the following expressions are used in the titles: "the 2014 film about the World War II-era genocide against Estonians"<sup>210</sup> or "a frozen portrait of Soviet horror"<sup>211</sup> or "a requiem for the inhabitants of the Baltic countries"<sup>212</sup> or, repeating the movie articulation, "Soviet Holocaust"<sup>213</sup>. In other reviews, the film is called to be "not only a patriotic memorial financed by major Estonian institutions, but a timely topic in the year of Russia's incorporation of Crimea"<sup>214</sup> and even more openly, "a timely warning".<sup>215</sup> Other reviews praise *In the Crosswind* as the "first encounter with the atrocity" which it appeared to be for many viewers.<sup>216</sup> All this testifies that the film has reached its audience at the festivals and has made its way to European cinematography. It can be assumed that after going on general release, *In the Crosswind* might receive even broader and deeper recognition among the Western audience.

As it was mentioned in the previous chapters, four critical representations are essential for the creation of a new master narrative and successful trauma representation. According to Jeffrey Alexander, the trauma representation should include thorough answers to four main

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<sup>210</sup> News | ERR, 'In The Crosswind': Eight Festivals, Nine Prizes', 2015

<<http://news.err.ee/v/Culture/ca41629b-fbf4-49b9-b566-fe622d35b7e9>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>211</sup> Laurence Boyce, 'In The Crosswind : A Frozen Portrait Of Soviet Horror', *Cineuropa - the best of european cinema*, 2014 <<http://cineuropa.org/nw.aspx?t=newsdetail&l=en&did=264237>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>212</sup> Alissa Simon, 'Film Review: 'In The Crosswind'', *Variety*, 2014

<<http://variety.com/2014/film/reviews/film-review-in-the-crosswind-1201302931/>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>213</sup> Deborah Young, "In The Crosswind': Film Review", *The Hollywood Reporter*, 2015

<<http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/crosswind-film-review-740126>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>214</sup> Ibid

<sup>215</sup> Alissa Simon, 'Film Review: 'In The Crosswind'', *Variety*, 2014

<<http://variety.com/2014/film/reviews/film-review-in-the-crosswind-1201302931/>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>216</sup> Nikola Grozdanovic, 'TIFF Review: Audacious 'In The Crosswind' Will Leave You Awestruck', *The Playlist*, 2015 <<http://blogs.indiewire.com/theplaylist/tiff-review-audacious-in-the-crosswind-will-leave-you-awestruck-20140916>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

questions – about the nature of trauma, the nature of victim, the identity of perpetrator and relation of the audience to the victims.<sup>217</sup> Based on Alexander's four general criteria for trauma representation, we can adapt them for Estonian case and formulate the questions as following:

- Did hundreds or thousands of Estonians experience deportation and repressions? Did they die because of replacement or were deliberately murdered? Did deportations leave a festering wound on Estonian psyche or it was it was incorporated in a more or less routine way?
- Were Estonians only victims of soviet regime's deportations and repressions, or it also include Latvians, Lithuanians etc? Were Estonians only victims or also perpetrators themselves? Were the particular groups of Estonians deported (military men, etc)?
- To what extent do the audience for trauma representation experience an identity with suffering Estonians?
- Was the Stalinist regime responsible for repressions and deportations? Is Russia also added to 'significant others' responsible for this trauma?

To analyze how the trauma is constructed in *In the Crosswind*, we look up how the movie provides answers to the following questions, using visual techniques, narrative structure, iconography and intertextual references to other historical movies.

### **Visual language**

Trauma is also understood as a rupture and the task of a historical movie is to represent this rupture<sup>218</sup>. Then the technique of *tableaux vivants* which is used to create a feeling of 'time frozen' might be one of the best for representing this rupture naturally, as the time goes normally before the tragedy and stops all over the time spent in Siberia. Martti Helde explains this choice of tableaux technique by citing one of the letters from his working archive, where a deported Estonian wrote: "Here in Siberia, I have the feeling that time is

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<sup>217</sup> Jeffrey C. Alexander, 'Toward A Theory Of Cultural Trauma', in *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, 1st edn (Berkeley, CA, USA: University of California Press, 2004). pp.13-15

<sup>218</sup> Joshua Francis Hirsch, *Afterimage* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004), p.3

standing still, that our bodies have been brought to Siberia but our souls are still in the summer in Estonia.”<sup>219</sup> To create the feeling particularly like people in Siberia felt then became the credo of the film. Helde adds, that his goal was to “take away the freedom of the audience, so they can’t choose where to look, where is the focus point”.<sup>220</sup> In mind of director, the format of ‘living pictures’ suited the best due to the delicacy of the subject matter. As Helde said, “I can’t quite imagine a fast-edited live action deportation drama today. I can, however, imagine a story with monumental visuals that would tell Estonia's tragic history in a more delicate way. It seemed fitting somehow.”<sup>221</sup>

Apparently, the technique of tableaux vivant makes the film look unlike the ‘fast-edited live action drama’ and turns it into sequence of photographic tableaux, and it might be assumed that such visual choice rather can be associated with documentary or archive footage. The impression is made that the people on the screen are not acting, but they are living the story such as if they were the real characters from archival photographs and footages. In this sense, the black and white visual choice serves the best to director’s intention and contributes to perceiving the story as authentic. Tableau vivant creates aesthetic detachment for the viewers from what is going on at the screen, which according to the trauma theory, is necessary for achieving a cathartic effect.

To complete each of 13 tableaux took from two to six months of preparation and all in all, the film making lasted almost four years.<sup>222</sup> The visual technique choice attained numerous testimonials and Helde’s achievement was compared to the works of Chris Marker and Alexander Sokurov.<sup>223</sup> However, as there is always a spoon of tar in the barrel of honey,

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<sup>219</sup> Martti Helde, "I'm guided by my inner feelings - what gets me going, what is important to create for society" (<http://cineuropa.org/it.aspx?t=interview&l=en&did=265169>, 2015).

<sup>220</sup> euronews, 'Estonian Cinema In The Spotlight At Film Festivals Worldwide', 2015 <<http://www.euronews.com/2014/11/21/attention-please-copy-paste-the-script-and-title-into-the-cms-if-it-is-exported/>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>221</sup> News | ERR, 'Film About June 1941 Deportations Opens', 2015 <<http://news.err.ee/v/Culture/2e541be5-c770-43a4-a290-17cffb070251>> [accessed 12 May 2015].

<sup>222</sup> Nikola Grozdanovic, 'TIFF Review: Audacious 'In The Crosswind' Will Leave You Awestruck', *The Playlist*, 2015 <<http://blogs.indiewire.com/theplaylist/tiff-review-audacious-in-the-crosswind-will-leave-you-awestruck-20140916>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>223</sup> Laurence Boyce, 'In The Crosswind : A Frozen Portrait Of Soviet Horror', *Cineuropa - the best of european cinema*, 2014 <<http://cineuropa.org/nw.aspx?t=newsdetail&l=en&did=264237>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

some criticize the choice of *tableaux vivants* for its complexity which requires adjustment from the audience and thus might limit the film's recognition outside the festivals.<sup>224</sup> Moreover, it makes the whole story less emotionally appealing, as the audience can witness the story only as still pictures, and the attention is fixed on 'frozen' actors instead of emotionally participating in the main character's story.<sup>225</sup> I felt this way during the first time watching the movie but all the next times I was absolutely consumed by the story itself and the complexity of the tableaux didn't distract my attention anymore. The story told in *In the Crosswind* is not less emotional than the stories, told in movies about the Holocaust or war crimes. However, the way of story presentation in some way constrains the possibility to engage into the story emotionally and 'live through' it, but on the other hand it might be an advantage, as film scholars such as Alison Landsberg claim that a historical movie should avoid overidentification to successfully communicate its message and provoke a conscious reflection on the narrative. Therefore a choice of visual technique is rather an asset for viewers, who engage in the movie intellectually because it gives them time to digest information.

Because of the peculiarity of tableaux technique, the music, score and carefully selected costumes probably play more vital role than actors' play. However, the actors for the main characters were chosen particularly due to their unique appearance – Laura Peterson and Tarmo Song look exactly like people from 1940s looked like.<sup>226</sup> Thus we can conclude that it was made in order to create the most credible picture of the past, as the faces of actors were carefully chosen alongside with the costumes and other props from that time.

The series of black and white tableaux are perfectly mastered with an idea of people's lives as "frozen in time". The movie starts with a black screen and only sounds are the hollowing of the wind. Thus from the very first seconds the film immerses the audience into the

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<sup>224</sup> Deborah Young, 'In The Crosswind': Film Review', *The Hollywood Reporter*, 2015  
<<http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/crosswind-film-review-740126>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>225</sup> Ibid

<sup>226</sup> Nikola Grozdanovic, 'TIFF Review: Audacious 'In The Crosswind' Will Leave You Awestruck', *The Playlist*, 2015 <<http://blogs.indiewire.com/theplaylist/tiff-review-audacious-in-the-crosswind-will-leave-you-awestruck-20140916>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

atmosphere of sadness and cold. Then the opening titles appear, which tell us about the victims of deportations from the Baltic states and that this is based on real story in letters:

*“On the night of 14 June 1941 more than 40.000 innocent people were deported from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The aim of this secret operation – done on Stalin’s orders – was to ethnically cleanse the Baltic countries of their native peoples. Among the thousands was Erna Tamm, whose letters from Siberia are the basis for this story.”*

As Stubbs argues, usage of prologue and epilogue text is a significant trope of a historical film genre, and they can be interpreted as “narrative transitions which attempt to stitch the events depicted in the main body of the film to written accounts of history”.<sup>227</sup> They usually contain factual information (like in *In the Crosswind* prologue) and can serve to assert the truth status of the historical narrative in the film.<sup>228</sup> As Stubbs suggests, even visual style of prologue and epilogue text matters as its aesthetic creates a solemn effect and solemnity of epilogue text also contributes to the process of memorialization, which is concern of many historical films.<sup>229</sup> Part of *In the Crosswind* epilogue concludes:

*“In Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania over 590,000 people were casualties of the mass repression during the Soviet occupation, Large numbers of deported women and children died from starvation and fatigue, very few made it back to their homeland. This film is dedicated to the victims of the Soviet Holocaust.”*

In *In the Crosswind*, the epilogue text, following Stubbs argument, is also used to once again pass judgment on historical characters represented in drama – in this case, it is the whole Soviet regime’s whose guilt is articulated. By mentioning the identity and number of victims of ‘Soviet Holocaust’, the epilogue text memorializes the memory of these victims and by defining the reason of casualties it articulates the nature of collective trauma. Thus, we may conclude that prologue and epilogue text were used in *In the Crosswind* for articulation of identity of the victim, identity of perpetrator and explaining the nature of trauma which happened to Estonians and other Baltic people.

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<sup>227</sup> Jonathan Stubbs, *Historical Film* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), p.21

<sup>228</sup> Ibid, pp.21-22

<sup>229</sup> Ibid, p.25

In the movie, it is particularly mentioned that the population of all three have been victims of repressions and deportations. Even the numbers of victims, given in the opening and closing titles, are total for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Thus, the film pursues the aim to represent all three nations as equally traumatized. Yet, the story focuses on Estonian cultural memory due to personal affiliations and cultural memory of director himself, and due to the fact that the story is built based on a real letters of Erna, an Estonian woman who survived through deportation to Siberia. Even though the sources which tell about deportations of 1941 and 1949, mention that deportations affected people of all nationalities living in Estonia<sup>230</sup>, in the film narrative shows only Estonians as victims of deportations and there is no even secondary character that is Russian and is portrayed not as perpetrator. Thus film does not respond to all historical facts, but in film it serves stronger dramatization of particularly Estonian people's trauma.

Scholars who studies oral and written life stories of deportees, claim that for Estonians all life narratives of deportations to Siberia merge into one narrative of deportation and suffering, where it is not such important when and where to somebody was deported.<sup>231</sup> It is also shown in the film, as the prologue text says that 40,000 of people were deported from the Baltic states on 14.07.1941 and epilogue text mentions over 590,000 people from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were casualties of mass repressions. However, this number (590,000) is too high for deportations and repressions of 1941 and 1949, and most probably includes also people who were forced to migrate in 1944. Another moment is that when we see Erna regretting that she did not flee away with her family when she was able to [58:00]. However, historical facts show that people did not expect the deportations to come and did not massively flee from Estonia in 1941. It happened only in 1943-44 before the second wave of deportations in 1949. Thus, there is a clear attempt to merge narratives of both deportations in order to add dramatic dimension and show suffering of people more emotionally.

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<sup>230</sup> Mart Laar (2006), Tiina Kirss, Ene Kõresaar and Marju Lauristin (2004)

<sup>231</sup> Tiina Kirss, Ene Kõresaar and Marju Lauristin, *She Who Remembers Survives* (Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2004).p/64 1 chapter

## Narrative analysis

*In the Crosswind* is a full length feature film, which genre can be identified as historical drama. It is important that *In the Crosswind* is art-house movie, which might also influence its popularity comparing with blockbusters, made for entertaining the audience.<sup>232</sup> Story starts with the main character's, Erna, recalling her memories of life in Estonia, when suddenly the peaceful pictures change into still pictures, as the time stops for those being deported. We see the story through Erna's eyes and her memories, which we are "living through". After Erna's family, like many other families in Estonia, was thrown out their house and forced to get in the cattle wagons, we follow Erna with her little daughter Eliide on their way to the remote area in Siberia. The script is based on letters, memoirs, archive materials, drawings, photographs and interviews with survivors, but the main inspiration comes from a diary by a young Estonian woman deportee Erna Tamm (a real name was changed for the movie).<sup>233</sup>

Steve Baker defines narrative as a "coherence given to the series of facts, a way to connect events and make interpretations based on those connections".<sup>234</sup> He argues that because the audience does not want to spend too much effort understanding them, the narrative is often narrowed down to one individual story and this is the problem set in the beginning and solved in the end.<sup>235</sup> A protagonist has one problem to solve and this defines the problematic of the movie. In *In the Crosswind* a problematic can be defined as Soviet deportations from Estonia (and Baltic's in general) and Erna's survival in Siberia can be regarded as the problem solution. Baker suggests, that in a movie in order to have a problem, a sense of what life was before it, should be created, that's why a film might start with a scenes depicting calm, happy life – where the character might return if the problem is solved.<sup>236</sup> This explains how the narrative of *In the Crosswind* is constructed, as the film

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<sup>232</sup> Denise J Youngblood, *Russian War Films* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007), p.5

<sup>233</sup> Allfilm.ee, "In The Crosswind" 2014', 2015 <<http://allfilm.ee/en/filmid/risttuules-2012-2/>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>234</sup> Steve Baker and David Allison, *Narrative And Ideology Part One: FILM*, 1st edn

<[https://brianair.files.wordpress.com/2010/03/narrative\\_and\\_ideology.pdf](https://brianair.files.wordpress.com/2010/03/narrative_and_ideology.pdf)> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>235</sup> Ibid

<sup>236</sup> Ibid



starts with calm scenes of family life, playing with a child or romantic moments between wife and husband. However, in the end in *In the Crosswind* it is shown that there is no way back to the previous life, as Erna's family is dead and there is nothing to return to in the homeland.

Narrative voice which accompanies all tableaux is Erna Tamm, the woman, whose diary served as one of the main inspirations of the plot. Erna's voice reads her letters to her husband, which she writes even without knowing if they would ever find the addressee. As, according to Steve Baker, narrator of the story positions the viewers into a certain relationship with the other characters<sup>237</sup>, in *In the Crosswind* we will follow the events through her diary and memories and we will be offered to adopt her evaluation of these events, as she reacts to them emotionally and describes her attitude to them.

There are five characters in the film, which are playing the main roles. Erna Tamm is a young Estonian woman, a mother and a wife, played by Laura Peterson. Erna's husband, Heldur (Tarmo Song) is a National Defense League man and her daughter Eliide is a pre-school age girl, played by Mirt Preegel. Erna can be defined as a main protagonist of the story, and her husband and daughter are comparatively less present in the story, but are important for the narrative and creation of emotional ties with the story of their family. Character of Erna will be elaborated in details further in text, but it also makes sense to describe more Heldur and Eliide. Heldur is a young Estonian man, who is at service at Defense League. Erna and Heldur have romantic relationships and family idyll, living in their house with a little Eliide. Eliide's character might be described as rather functional, as we almost don't hear from her and her thoughts and feelings are only available through Erna's comments. Eliide and Heldur's characters are important for dramatic turns of storyline.

Another character is Hermiine (Ingrid Isotamm), a woman who is also deported to Siberia with Erna and Eliide and constantly helps them survive on their way to and after settling in the labor camp. She is a controversial character, and we might suggest that she is brought

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<sup>237</sup> Ibid

up to show the contrast of Erna and Hermiine's temper and choices, for example when Hermiine accepts the chairman of kolkhoz proposal, while Erna refuses as she doesn't want another family and is faithful to her husband and daughter's memories. Hermiine's character shows us that Estonians were different people per se and as people, they made different choices – as it is shown in the movie, many of them decided to stay in Siberia after being released, or choose comfort over their moral principles. Yet, Hermiine is shown as good rather than bad character – we see how she helps little Eliide, sharing her bread with her or helps Erna, telling her where the bread in the camp is kept.

Another controversial character is the chairman of kolkhoz (Einar Hillep), who represents the Soviets in the movie. He is antagonist, representing the whole mechanism of Soviet system, just a nameless cog in the machine of Soviet terror. He clearly abuses his power, intimidating Erna to acquiesce his sex abuse, threatening her with deportation further north. We see him later, presenting flowers to Erna, and from her comment, learn that he has proposed to all women in kolkhoz unless finally Hermiine has accepted his proposal. After the Stalin's death, the chairman will be convicted to the labor camp for marrying "an enemy of the people". Hermiine will share the same fate, as she will be sentenced for another ten years in labor camp.

It is known fact that in all stories there are characters that we sympathize and those we dislike, which represent the good and evil in general. Moreover, as Steve Baker argues, because narratives are often simplified to make the perception easier, they might present the good and evil as straightforward opposites.<sup>238</sup> The conflict between the opposites is what makes the film interesting and helps us decide who we are loyal to, and their clash is what will produce problematic in the film.<sup>239</sup> In our case, we are clearly offered to what characters we should sympathize and identify with them (Erna, Heldur and Eliide), who is pitiable (Hermiine) or who is the evil perpetrator (soldiers, the chairman of kolkhoz, who in fact just represent the whole Soviet state). In the movie, the perpetrator is clearly articulated

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<sup>238</sup> Steve Baker and David Allison, *Narrative And Ideology Part One: FILM*, 1st edn  
<[https://brianair.files.wordpress.com/2010/03/narrative\\_and\\_ideology.pdf](https://brianair.files.wordpress.com/2010/03/narrative_and_ideology.pdf)> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>239</sup> Ibid

and it is the Soviet Union in general, which is personalized in Russian soldiers, who arrested and murdered people, and chairman of kolkhoz who raped Erna.

Probably, it can be said that there is no particular villain in the movie, because all perpetrators – soldiers, military officials, labor camp chairman – are nameless, as like simple parts of the Soviet totalitarian machine. Only the name of ‘comrad Stalin’ is openly pronounced in the last tableau, when the news about his death arrives to the labor camp. Such an articulation of his name suggest that he is the ‘ultimate evil’, a villain responsible for all the crimes of Soviet regime during the WWII and in its aftermath.

Here we move to analyzing the storyline. From the beginning we are shown the scenes of Erna’s life with her family in her house, rounded with the fields and apple trees. Her memories are vivid and full of joy and happiness, and so is the picture on the screen. However, since the moment their family is arrested and kicked out their home, the picture becomes still and turns into a series of black and white tableaux, consciously making the flow of time slower. The period of life in Siberia, full of oppression and cruelty, is shown only with tableaux, and only when Erna comes back to the homeland, the time starts to run again and we see the motion in a usual way.

The first scenes show us Erna, her face and hands, pulling a ribbon with an absent look. We don’t know where she is and what is around, but the next scenes immerse us in her memories. These scenes deepen us into the time before the deportations, as we see a family living happily in their farm in Estonia. The pictures of a field, an apple tree, a child playing in the yard, a paper ship down the river – all this is called to witness airiness, ethereality of that times. As we learn from the voice of narrator, these pictures are Erna’s memories from the period before the deportation. Everything on the screen suggests to see how peaceful and calm their life was and at the same time, how fragile it was – just as toy paper boat, sailed on the river.

Relation of the audience to the victims can be deduced on a few levels. First, we know that the story must be made personal for audience to identify with the characters and ‘take on’ their experience emotionally, on a deeper level. Here we see how the story starts with

scenes from the life of a young family as the memories of Erna are unfolding at the beginning of the film. A viewer can see Erna with her little daughter Eliide and husband Heldur, who are happily and peacefully living in their farm in rural Estonia. Family routine scenes (breakfast, mails, playing with a child) are employed to help viewer to identify himself with the characters. Those scenes of family life should make the characters seem more familiar, to trigger associations with viewers' own family members and thus make the distance shorter.

Secondly, from the start the movie offers its viewers to see Estonians as normal, healthy people, who are not yet starved or deformed by labor, which would make it more difficult to identify with them. We see Estonians as normal, not marginalized people, peaceful rural citizens, whose idyllic life has been interrupted by the Soviets and this allows us to perceive their cruelty towards Estonians even more traumatic.

Then time becomes 'frozen' and all events that follow, we see in the sequence of *tableaux*. First, we hear the sounds of wind again while the picture is still, and the suspense grows gradually. It is a crack of dawn and we are shown a house, which door is open, and unusual noises can be heard from inside. We hear a dog barking, a knock on the door, sound of broken glass, steps. The camera slowly turns around, showing us stunned people, set in the truck, Erna holding her daughter, her husband, next to her and an elderly couple in the truck. Everything is still and we see only the road, in a very long cadre when the house becomes gradually lost to sight.

The second *tableau* shows us the crowd of people, being taken out of their home, carried away by trucks, disregarding their age or position – as we see a pregnant women with a child, old people and children, all powerless to escape their fate. A picture of a small boy, who hid himself behind the house and covered his head in a pointless attempt to escape from the fate, conveys this picture as a metaphor for all Estonian people at that moment. Camera catches a young woman with a hair-curler next to the wagon, to illustrate that people didn't even have time for such things as make their hair. Other girl is holding bread in her hand, giving it to a boy, because many people didn't manage to take any food.

We can see that there was no particular group of population, who were subjected to suffering while others not. Contrariwise, it is shown that all people, disregarding their status (Erna is a wife of Defense League man) are suffering through this trauma. The military men are executed without trial after five months in another labor camp. Additionally, while showing the deportations taking place, no particular location in Estonia was mentioned, and this might also point at the collectivity of trauma, which has been experienced by the whole country, not just particular cities or parts. We may see that in contrast, the place where people are deported is clearly pronounced (Novosibirsk, Siberia).

It is shown that Estonians were arrested, thrown out from their homes without allowance to take most of their personal belongings, often even without any food. In what is following, we see the train station and a wagonage, with some people already in the cattle wagons. People are all around, lost and desperate, holding their poor baggage and children. Here is one of the most dramatic moments in the whole movie, when we see Erna with her husband saying the last goodbye to each other. The music is a narrator here, as we can hear no words, but a dramatic instrumental music, triggering emotions and empathy for the main characters. We see people's faces very closely as the camera makes a close-up, we can feel their emotions, pain, fear, desperateness while the camera is sliding around to show us all the details of this mosaic of human emotions. All this is called to explain and present the nature of the trauma and to show that it was not only death which was awaiting for many deportees, but shock and grief of being separated from family and taken away from home. This is called to show the deeper, inner psychological side of trauma of deportations, which has changed the life of the people forever.

The next time we see Erna with her daughter, is already in the wagon, next to a few dozens of other women and children. They were put into the cattle wagons (here we can feel the reference to many Holocaust movies, as the cattle wagons were massively used to deport the Jews to the concentration camps), where women and children are separated from men and all people are kept in terrific conditions. The wagons are empty, cold and without any utilities, people have to spend there weeks on their way to Siberia without a possibility to change clothes or wash themselves. Camera shows a young girl, lying on the floor in the

wagon in a pose, that implicitly shows that she's pregnant and is about to give a birth. The life conditions and food shortage are so difficult, that not everybody could make that journey. Erna's little daughter, Eliide, caught dysentery and was in a sad plight. In the tableau depicting arrival to Siberia, Erna comments that from 51 women and children, only 42 survived [from 23:30]. Thus, it is explicitly shown that even treatment during the transportation was so harsh that caused many deaths itself, alone from conditions in the labor camps.

In the series of following tableaux, the viewers are shown the horrific conditions of the new life of deportees in the labor camps. 200 g of bread per day, which was given only to adults, excluding children, have made the survival of the most people a real struggle for life. Erna's child is still weak from dysentery and starvation makes her weaker and less able to make it through. The drama is shown expressively in the words of Erna, when she talks about her daughter birthday wish: "When I asked Eliide, what she would want as a present for her birthday, Eliide replied, a loaf of bread. I asked what she would want if she had enough to eat...she started crying and still said, a loaf of bread..."[28:13-28:29]. We can imagine feelings of a mother who sees her child dying from starvation and who is powerless to change a thing. In the next tableaux we will see how a child is slipping away, and her mother standing over a grave in the forest, when the camera eventually moves to show us the number of other graves, all around the forest. It is very difficult not to sense the grief and despair of this moment. The movie clearly shows the inhumane conditions and attitude to the inmates, which have caused inevitable death of many children, woman, old people.

While people, who had been deported, were gradually dying out because of harsh conditions of cold, labour and starvation, those who stayed in Estonia, were arrested and became victims of terror and repressions. We see Erna's husband, Heldur being captured, interrogated together with many other Estonian men, who served in National Defense League. In a series of *tableaux* we witness how the prisoners are undressed, followed outside, lined up against the wall and executed without a trial. This scene of organized, deliberate murder of Heldur and other Estonian men represents the whole bunch of killings

of Estonian people committed by the Soviets. Erna, as many other women, will never see her husband again. This scene must accentuate the character of mass killings which took place in three Baltic states, which constitutes collective national trauma. Alison Landsberg's analysis of movie *Hotel Rwanda* has been useful to draw some parallels to analyze *In the Crosswind*.<sup>240</sup> Like director of *Hotel Rwanda*, Martti Helde might also have chosen to include graphic depictions of mass killings of Estonians, but he has avoided doing this. There was no obsessive attempt to incorporate all brutality of atrocities, using the scenes similar to documentary movie or archive footage. It might be a rational decision, because at some point such images are no longer able to shock the audience. As Barbie Zelizer has suggested, people have become so accustomed to images of atrocity that they might not appear to be so affected by them anymore.<sup>241</sup> Thus, we can see only one scene of murder in the whole movie, and this is when Erna's husband, Heldur is convicted and shot by the Soviets. To intensify the dramatic feelings, this moment is accompanied by a male-voice chorus.

Alison Landsberg claims, the scenes of violence and atrocities might get the viewers too close and provoke some kind of 'voyeuristic engagement'.<sup>242</sup> This might be avoided by a way of showing the massacres, by not letting the viewer 'in', keeping them in a distance. This is the case of presenting massacre in *In the Crosswind* – we don't see the bloody details of a murder itself, as we are kept distant, the scene is shot from a house, and people are shot in the inner yard. In this case, as Landsberg claims, the viewers are not overwhelmed by these images, which might lead to 'voyeuristic engagement'.

Another scene is made very powerfully, because of the effect that we see but without showing how event itself happened on the screen. This is a tableau where Erna is shown in despair, bending over a grave with a cross, and her voice tells us about mother who has lost her child. We don't see the death of Eliide, but are shown already her grave. This way a

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<sup>240</sup> Alison Landsberg, 'Politics And The Historical Film', in *Companion to the historical film*, 1st edn (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), pp.11-29

<sup>241</sup> Zelizer (1998) cited by Alison Landsberg, 'Politics And The Historical Film', in *Companion to the historical film*, 1st edn (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013).

<sup>242</sup> Ibid, p.22

film interrupts a narrative flow and forces viewers think, fill the hole in the narrative themselves and thus, instead of openly show a death and a grave as result, a film gives a viewer an opportunity to draw conclusions himself, which might give stronger emotional effect in the end. It can also be assumed that in *In the Crosswind* a flashback device is used to break the linear narrative flow, as we first see Erna in real time, then immerse in her memories and in the end we see her again at the same place as in the beginning of the film and this also helps connect the memories with the present.

Narrative of *In the Crosswind* substantially resembles narratives of Estonian women-survivors from Siberia, which is due to author's thorough attention to the written, visual and oral evidence of that times. The filmmakers also met with a few survivors and collected their stories. That's why the story of Erna embodies the whole bunch of Siberian stories. It would be useful to refer to these narratives to see what exactly was borrowed for the movie. In my mind, almost all scenes shown on the screen have evidence in narratives of deportees. For instance, the first *tableau* [07:44] ends with a very long shot of a road, the road to home which gradually disappears with truck moving further away. This resonates to women's description of the last view of home as unforgettable and regret for the lost home.

In Erna's story we see the starvation and hard labour in Siberian kolkhoz, and she tells about 200 g of bread as a day norm and that there is no bread for children [25:58]. Many stories tell about death of the children, youngsters and elderly people and about feeling of powerlessness of witnesses, who couldn't save them. This also found the way into the picture, with the scene of Erna binding over Eliide's grave in winter. People also told about intellectual starvation during the long winter eves, and the viewers are shown how Estonians escaped that, by singing national songs and celebrating secretly the Christmas Eve [44:36]. Stories also include description of people's 'destiny companions' and how being close to them and sharing the hardship of life in Siberia helped them survive. In the film, Erna has such a 'destiny companion' Hermiine, who helps her and Eliide from the very beginning. Hermiine shares her bread, tells where food is kept in kolkhoz, supports Erna all time of their stay in Siberia. Cooperation between women which helped them survive is also an important element of Siberian narratives. Another is a skill of solid work



and persistency, which allowed Estonian women survive and get better life and work conditions for themselves. Erna tells, that she has been working hard and over fulfilled her working quotas, which made her one of the best workers and after receiving money for that, she was able to buy a cow.

People also mention in their stories from Siberia how the barter of clothes for food helped them survive. In film this is reflected by episode, when Erna mentions that she changed Heldur's trousers for food. Another important part of the Siberian narratives is stealing of food and punishment for that. In the film, Erna is caught by chairman when she was trying to steal bread for Eliide and her later destiny depends on a choice – whether to comply to sexual harassment of chairman or be sent further east. This brings out another vital part of women's stories which is rape and sexual submission, which will be discussed broader in the following analysis.

### **Music in *In the Crosswind***

Music and sound design play a huge role in the movie, as at many moments sound mobilizes our senses, beyond visual. For example, in scene of Erna's rape, which we do not see directly, first we follow the camera, showing us all corners of barrack, while we hear a record playing one of popular Russian songs, and gradually music gives way to Russian voices, murmuring from which we can gradually catch some words like “кто их научит как не мы” (“who will teach them if not us”) [35:28]. All this forces us to think and try to figure out what it means what we hear. Here one may draw some parallel to another historical movie, about another ‘forgotten Holocaust’ – *Hotel Rwanda*, which uses similar approach to sound design (radio broadcasting) to narrate the story of Tutsi genocide.<sup>243</sup>

Sounds are used expressively in *In the Crosswind* to mediate the story. For example, we find out about Stalin's death from the radio broadcast, which is the same way as deported people got to know about it. Another example is when Erna is caught while attempting a thievery, we hear a record, where a male voice reads aloud in Russian the sentence for a

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<sup>243</sup> Alison Landsberg, 'Politics And The Historical Film', in *Companion to the historical film*, 1st edn (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013).

thievery of government property and other crimes, which are punished by death. The film's choice is to make the viewers listen to narrative voice and sounds and try to comprehend the story by themselves, which requires more attention from the side of the audience but at the same time, trying to hear what the voices in Russian say is an interesting exercise for an intellectual viewer

There is one interesting example of using music in the movie, which is the song *Wearied Sun* (Russian: *Утомлённое солнце*, *Utomlyonnoye solntse*). This song is a Russian version of Polish tango *This is the Last Sunday* (Polish: *To ostatnia niedziela*) with lyrics about the breakup of lovers – and it is difficult to escape the irony, taking into account the nature of scene when it is played (Erna's rape by chairman). This tango was very popular after the WWII and it has been used in a broad range of movies, including famous Spielberg's *Schindler's List* (1993) and Mihalkov's *Burnt by the Sun* (1994).<sup>244</sup> Another interesting reference is that *Burnt by the Sun* is a story of a Red Army officer and his family during the Great Purge in the Stalinist Soviet Union, and the title “Burnt by the sun” itself arrives from this tango's name. *Burnt by the Sun* received Grand Prize at Cannes Film Festival in 1994 and Academy Award for the best foreign film, among many other awards. This suggests familiarity of the international audience with *Burnt by the Sun*. All this provides an interesting reference to another story of Stalinist crimes.

The composer who conducted music for *In the Crosswind* is young Estonian composer Pärt Uusberg, who is known for choral music, but he has written also works for ensemble, piano, orchestra and film music.<sup>245</sup> The soundtrack of *In the Crosswind* includes performance of his chamber choir *Head Ööd, Vend* (Good Night Brother Chamber Choir). The choice of Estonian composer and music may suggest that it was made intentionally in order to add authenticity to the story, as the visual choice and plot are not of Hollywood style, thus choosing a well-known soundtrack composer might create a feeling of some foreignness to the narrative.

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<sup>244</sup> Wikipedia, 'To Ostatnia Niedziela', 2015 <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/To\\_ostatnia\\_niedziela](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/To_ostatnia_niedziela)> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>245</sup> Filmmusic.ee, 'Pärt Uusberg | Film Music Estonia', 2015 <<http://www.filmmusic.ee/songwriters-and-composers/part-uusberg>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

*In the Crosswind* background music is mostly instrumental, with a few interruptions of chorus singing in the most dramatic moments. We may suggest that such choice of music is typical for historical drama, as the instrumental soundtrack would not distract people from the story. Undistinguishable whispers also contribute to mood of sadness of the whole movie, they add mystical atmosphere and immerse the viewers into the story. In combination with choral music in the most dramatic moments of the film, they create a feeling of strangeness and suspense. Background diegetic sounds and murmuring in Russian or Estonian help viewers' imagination to create a full image without showing the source of sound itself. The flow of narration in the film is detached from diegetic sounds, as while we hear the hollowing of the wind or steps, car sound, the actors and images on the screen are still, the only movement is made by camera around them. The diegetic sounds (and narrative voice) thus also serve the function of moving the story on the screen. All this contributes to creating mood and atmosphere for the movie, which is important for emotional engagement with the story.

### **Iconographic analysis and intertextuality of *In the Crosswind***

Iconography is an important aspect of genre because particular objects appear on screen when we see a particular genre.<sup>246</sup> Thus iconography can be defined as particular signs associated with particular genres, because producers use certain images that are iconographic to relate film within a specific genre.<sup>247</sup> In *In the Crosswind*, iconography is called to make the image look as authentic and realistic as possible and rests abundantly upon the visual evidence from 1941-1949 deportations. In a close cooperation with a production designer Reet Brandt and costume designer Anna-Liisa Liiver, Martti Helde has spent ages looking through drawings, photos and sketches in order to discover visual tools to express the feeling of a time frozen and helplessness, of a freedom taken away.<sup>248</sup> No wonder that the settings of the story look very authentic – all, starting from wooden

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<sup>246</sup> Steve Campsall (2002) 'GCSE Film Analysis Guide'

<sup>247</sup> Brianair.wordpress.com, 'Understanding Iconography', 2010 <<https://brianair.wordpress.com/film-theory/understanding-iconography/>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>248</sup> Martti Helde, "I'm guided by my inner feelings - what gets me going, what is important to create for society" (<http://cineuropa.org/it.aspx?t=interview&l=en&did=265169>, 2015).

barracks in Novosibirsk area to old rags of deported people, from Stalin's bust on chairman's table to cattle wagons, carrying people to Siberia. On the photographs from archive of Museum of Occupation one may see the rustic huts, made of logs, women piling those logs and doing lumberjack work, even the field of full of crosses; however there is no photographic evidence of guard towers or barbed wire.<sup>249</sup>

Besides setting, all historically accurate costumes and props have been thoroughly picked up to create a feeling of authenticity of the story. Even the physical appearance of main actors was thoroughly chosen to show how the people looked back then.<sup>250</sup> Images of Stalin's portraits and busts, flags with Lenin and other props which appear on the screen, explicitly point towards the identity of the perpetrator – the Soviet Union.

It would be logical to presuppose that *In the Crosswind* employs iconography typical for historical films. However, analyzing the iconography of *In the Crosswind*, it would make more sense to refer to the visual art such as sculpture or paintings, rather than explore the cinematic metaphors. As Martti Helde explains, during the preparation stage they have been exploring the visual art mediums such as portrayal of human body in paintings and sculpture.<sup>251</sup> Due to the specific visual language of the film, it made more sense for them to draw on visual art mediums, rather than to make references to other films.<sup>252</sup> Helde said that the specific nature of each scene affected the references and the authors, which were the source of inspiration, but among all, two of the most influential artists were Jean-François Millet and Caspar David Friedrich.<sup>253</sup>

*In the Crosswind* has a reach symbolic language, which helps communicate the story of trauma. When the film starts with scenes from life before deportations, we see a house, a garden with apple trees, flowers, a river and a small ship, carried away by water. These are symbols of summer, of peace and life, which eventually changed to the winter and death,

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<sup>249</sup> Okupatsioon.ee, 'Фотографии Из Сборников Мементо', 2015 <[http://www.okupatsioon.ee/ru/---](http://www.okupatsioon.ee/ru/--->)> [accessed 12 May 2015].

<sup>250</sup> Alissa Simon, 'Film Review: 'In The Crosswind'', *Variety*, 2014 <<http://variety.com/2014/film/reviews/film-review-in-the-crosswind-1201302931/>> [accessed 9 April 2015].

<sup>251</sup> Helde, 2015

<sup>252</sup> ibid

<sup>253</sup> Helde, 2015

symbolized by dark and snow. The apple tree garden is a very important symbol in the story, in my opinion it stands for Erna herself, which is shown in Erna's dream: the story starts in Erna's apple tree garden, she mentions the apple tree a few times in her letters to Heldur, and when she is dreaming about him, she also sees them both in the apple garden. When she describes her dream with apple tree, the story on screen shows Heldur's execution and one can conclude that a fallen branch of apple tree here symbolized Heldur's death. Also, when she cries in the dream, Heldur says her tears are sweet as an apple juice; or when she looks at the apple tree, its branches don't strain towards the sky anymore, but bended to the ground – it means Erna's suffering and depression and her change in life attitude.

Another symbol, which is implicitly embedded into story, is a swallow, which can be seen in the last tableau at the moment when Erna gets to know about end of deportation and return home [1:04:58]. Swallow is known as one of Estonian symbols, so one may assume that using this symbol in this scene is called to strengthen connotations to Estonia and freedom.

The technique of tableaux vivant in *In the Crosswind* bears a resemblance to works of such prominent film makers as Chris Marker with his *La Jetée*, made as a sequence of photographs followed by narrative voice and Alexander Sokurov's *Russian Arc* – an art-house film about centuries of Russian history, made in one double. The director of cinematography Erik Põllumaa named Béla Tarr as one of his influences and admitted that he worried if in the end the movie would turn out “too beautiful” so it would not suit the topic.<sup>254</sup> Due to specific choice of visual language the film is less reminiscent of other historical dramas, but there are some scenes in the film, which might remind other well known historical movies about history of WWII.

For instance, some references to *Schindler's List*, one of the most known films about Holocaust, can be noticed. The image of piles of things – boots, clothes, suitcases etc – has already become a widely recognized symbol of Holocaust depiction, familiar to the

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<sup>254</sup> News | ERR, 'Film About June 1941 Deportations Opens', 2015 <<http://news.err.ee/v/Culture/2e541be5-c770-43a4-a290-17cffb070251>> [accessed 12 May 2015].

audience. In *In the Crosswind*, the pile of prisoner's boots which the camera shows right after the murder scene [from 49:22] suggests the usage of iconography of the Holocaust and reference to the cinematographic texts about the Holocaust. Another example might be the way how the bodies are put on the bogies, which reminiscent the cadres from footage from Nazi extermination camps. This image of wheelbarrow with bodies puts emphasis on massive character of Soviet killings and draws a parallel with the nature of Nazi crimes.

Another scene, reminiscent of the Holocaust movies, is the scene on the train station, which immediately reminds *Umschlagplatz* where the Jews were gathered before being departed to the concentration camps [from 11:27]. One can draw another parallel from the image of the cattle wagons, which are used to transport Estonians to Siberia. Those cattle wagons from the *Schindler's List* are the first what comes to mind, when we see the scenes of Erna with her daughter and other women and children, captured in for 26 days without any facilities, without chance to change the clothes or wash, and even without food. The image of the cattle wagons is powerful reference to the Holocaust iconography in *In the Crosswind*. The whole storyline is called to reminiscent Hitler's 'final solution' to the Jewish question, as it is openly articulated in the epilogue text: "This film is dedicated to the Soviet Holocaust".

Turning back to intertextuality with other films with similar message, one can look at the historical films about Stalin's epoch, made in different countries such as Finland, Ukraine, Poland etc. An interesting comparison might be drawn between *In the Crosswind* and Finnish film adaptation of Sofi Oksanen's novel *Purge* (*Puhdistus* 2008).

*Purge*, both novel and film, can be perceived as narratives of memory and trauma, depicting Soviet occupation as a rupture. The film *Purge* is about Estonian national history of a period of World War II and its aftermath. *Purge's* language is sharper and it employs elements of thriller and melodrama, also borrowing from Hollywood movies the style of picturing violence. However, if talking about dichotomy of self-other, *Purge* in comparison to *In the Crosswind* is rather not so black and white. While in *In the Crosswind* we see Estonians portrayed as noble, patriotic and innocent victims, *Purge* shows that it is always

a personal decision to resign oneself to regime or withstand it. My reading of *Purge* was that it rather shows Estonian nation not as merely victimized and suffering, but also touches an issue of collaboration with Soviet regime, which is far less popular topic. *In the Crosswind* avoids touching collaboration issue, if only not to consider the character of Hermiine, who eventually married the chairman of kolkhoz, as collaborator with the Soviet regime which in my mind would be not correct.

The example of *Purge* (or rather debates over its reading) can serve as an example of clash between the different modes of Estonian collective memory – memory of totalitarian crimes and suffering versus milder memories of late socialism period life.<sup>255</sup> Among all, *Purge* was criticized for distortion of history regarding the issue of sexual violence against women in the Stalinist period.<sup>256</sup> There is a critique that violence against women is not an often used topos of Estonian cultural memory (although it is present in Estonian women's life stories).<sup>257</sup> However, this is rather due to lack of historical research on this topic in Estonian context than absence of such phenomenon during Soviet period. At the same time, sexual violence against women is a topos in the transnational memory culture, which is familiar to the international audience.<sup>258</sup> Making parallels to *In the Crosswind*, we may suggest that the scene of sexual violence against the protagonist, Erna, while reflecting an element of Estonian women's narrative of deportations, also appeals to the well known topos in order to subscribe to transnational memory and enhance recognition of the story.

In this regard, *In the Crosswind* also can be in some sense aligned with a movie about the Soviet's liberation of Berlin *A Woman in Berlin* (In German *Anonyma – Eine Frau in Berlin*). This is a story also based on memoirs, published anonymously and portraying the brutality of Soviet Red Army soldiers towards the German women. The scene when the chairman of kolkhoz threatens Erna with punishment and rapes her, can be read as a reference to the story of German women, also raped by the Soviets. This is not particularly adhering

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<sup>255</sup> Eneken Laanes, 'Sofi Oksanen's "Purge" In Estonia', *Baltic Worlds*, 2 (2012), p 19-21  
<<http://balticworlds.com/%E2%80%9Cpurge%E2%80%9D-in-estonia/>> [accessed 12 May 2015].

<sup>256</sup> Ibid

<sup>257</sup> Ibid

<sup>258</sup> Ibid

to the Holocaust discourse, but nevertheless it contributes to the discourse of Soviet crimes, including mass rape brutality. *Anonyma* shows how German women, being powerless to protect themselves from constant raping, tried to seek protection from one person, in the movie it is a Soviet officer. This would grant them security from the other soldiers. In *In the Crosswind*, Erna tells in one of her letters, that many women in kolkhoz seek protection from the chairman in order to have some better survival conditions. She does not blame them for doing so, as everybody wants to survive, but she admits that she refused his proposal because she didn't want a new family.

Another movie, which might stand in line next to *In the Crosswind*, is a film made by Polish director Andrzej Wajda about another Soviet crime, *Katyn*. This film also represents a collective trauma and appeals to Polish cultural memory, being called a 'national requiem' and memorial.<sup>259</sup> Comparizon to *Katyn* may also justified by the fact that both Estonia and Poland pursue the same goal – to achieve recognition to their national narratives of suffering in the pan-European memory. The scene of shooting of National Defence League man, among whom was Heldur, reminiscent the final scenes from *Katyn*, when NKVD officers shot Polish officers in Katyn forest and bury their corpses in common graves. *Katyn* realistically shows the atrocities of Soviets and the viewers witness the killings 'with their own eyes'. This film also explicitly points towards the perpetrator and clearly shows that it was the Soviets crime and the communists should bear responsibility fot it. In this terms, *In the Crosswind* resonates to *Katyn* as both films articulate the discourse of Stalinist crimes condemnation and seek their national traumas to be cured.

The other motif which is shown in *Katyn* is hope, which the women – wives, mothers and daughters of Polish officers still have – that their men are alive. In *In the Crosswind*, Erna writes letters to Heldur during all her stay in Siberia, and only after Estonia regained independence, she received the goodbye letter from her husband and learned about his death. This is a powerful instrument, used in both films, when the viewers already know what happened while protagonist does not and it is used to make a narrative dramatic and engage the audience emotionally.

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<sup>259</sup> Alexander Etkind and others, *Remembering Katyn* (Cambridge, Eng.: Polity Press, 2012), Chapter 2.



Another recent historical movie about crimes of Stalinist regime is Ukrainian historical drama *The Guide*, which tells the story of the ordered murder of blind singers, called *kobzary* who were carriers of Ukrainian culture, history, memory and identity. This film also fits the alternative discourse of the Eastern Europe, which reveals the Soviet crimes such as Ukrainian Holodomor in 1930s or mass killings of people by *cheka*. *The Guide* communicates the trauma of Ukrainians and similar to *In the Crosswind*, defines the Soviet Union headed by Stalin as the main perpetrators. This film also has inexplicit ambitions to reach the broader, foreign audience as is evidenced by an American nationality of the main character, who is a narrator of the story. This makes these two films close, to my mind, as they both serve the same goal – to achieve full-scale condemnation of Soviet crimes.

To conclude, in *In the Crosswind* a one-story narrative approach is used to make the story easier to follow. The narrative voice is very important element of the narrative, as it provides with emotional evaluation of the events. The narrative of the film is based on testimonies of Estonian women-survivors and borrows heavily from their life stories. Every tableau is made to be communicative of the trauma of deportations and depicts one or another element from Siberia deportees' narrative. The film has a rich iconography, however some images and symbols make references to narratives of other traumas, shown in known historical films about Holocaust, Katyn or Holodomor. It can be assumed that some imagery of the Holocaust has been used in the film to appeal to transnational memory and create a meaningful comparison between two crimes against humanity. Such visual elements as *tableau vivants*, are called to transcend the memory of the deportations and to my mind, this visual choice is a good choice to treat such delicate topic. The film is art-house, but referring to the topic, it is a suitable choice which might attract the intellectual audience and reveal the potential of the *tableau vivants* for narrating the topic of traumas.

## CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the thesis was to answer the question, how the Estonian national narrative of trauma and victimhood is represented in the Estonian contemporary historical movie *In the Crosswind* and in what ways, with the help of what means this trauma narrative is delivered in the movie? Stemming from the research aim, we explored how all elements of the film communicate trauma narrative in a way which would find understanding and reception among the foreign audience. For this we employed the trauma theory with J. Alexander's four critical questions for trauma representation and analyzed how all elements such as cinematic techniques, narrative structure, iconography and intertextuality help communicate the trauma and memory of deportations and engage the audience both intellectually and emotionally, avoiding over-identification and leading to potential catharsis.

As we didn't study the film only as a work of art, but also as a cultural and social product, we employed the visual CDA method to find out how the discourse of the film adheres to or challenges the European narrative of Stalinist crimes. For this we explored the domestic Estonian (and Eastern European in general) discourse on Stalinist crimes of deportations, by referring to speeches of Latvian and Estonian presidents as representatives of the states and looked in details at Estonian memory regime. Then we compared it to the Western European discourse on Stalinist crimes and emphasized the conflict between those two discourses – one of redemption and suffering and another of forgetting and forgiving. Stemming from the social structures and processes, that brought the film into life and ideological message that it bears, we can conclude that *In the Crosswind* is a cultural product which aims at promoting Estonian national narrative of trauma and adheres to Eastern European mnemonic discourse of Stalinist crimes condemnation. Thus it is challenging the dominant Western vision of European history with the singularity of the Holocaust. As we analyze the film in the framework of social structures, we can assume that the reception of the film might be problematic among the members of mnemonic communities such as Western European (and Russian) due to contrariety to their preferable historic narratives. However, we also assume that the film as a cultural product is important

and powerful tool for dissemination of national memory abroad due to its experiential nature and ability to evoke a prosthetic memory.

The film can be defined as a piece of work which aims to represent and reconstruct Estonian national trauma of deportations in such way that would be understandable for the foreign audience and would help find recognition and acceptance (which might be problematic due to the reasons mentioned above). To achieve its aim, *In the Crosswind* employs an outstanding visual language and cinematic techniques, narrative structure, iconography and intertextual references to other texts, which might enhance the level of recognition of the film. To analyze how successful is trauma construction in the film, we adopted J. Alexander's four critical questions for successful trauma representation. We can conclude that film sufficiently matched all criteria such as defining the nature of trauma and identity of the victim, attributing responsibility to the perpetrator and establishing the identification between the victim and viewer.

Reach iconography of the film adds to authenticity and uses language of symbols to communicate the story. *In the Crosswind* makes references to the other historical films, such as *Schindler's List*, *Katyn*, *Anonyma*, *Purge*, *The Guide*, *Burnt by the Sun* in order to make the story on the screen recognizable and borrows some images from the narrative and imagery of the Holocaust (such as a pile of boots, trains and railway stations, cattle wagons). It also touches upon a topic of sexual violence against women, which is not common for presenting a narrative of deportations in Estonia, and thus it can be regarded as appeal to widely disseminated or transnational memory of sexual violence against women.

To sum up, *In the Crosswind* can be considered as a successfully constructed cultural work, which attempts to challenge the dominant memory discourse of communist crimes in Europe and promote Estonian national narrative of deportations trauma. Through the means of prosthetic memory, the film has a potential to influence the foreign audience and contribute to construction of transnational memory of Stalinist crimes. It would be an overstatement to say that this goal is achieved with one film, but it is definitely a case of contribution to Eastern European memory politics of 'becoming European'.

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